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CHATS ON WRITERS AND BOOKS

JOHN N · CRAWFORD

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BY

JOHN N. CRAWFORD

(J. N. C.)

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

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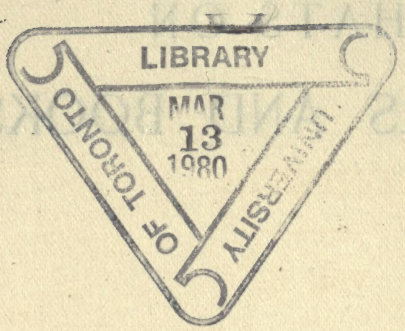

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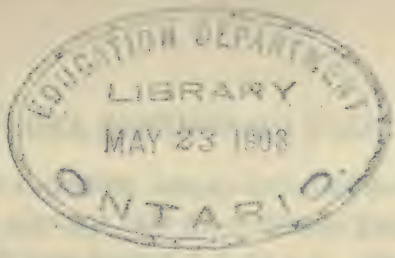

CHATS ON WRITERS AND BOOKS.

HOLLAND HOUSE.

THERE are many famous houses in England well known to the readers of history and to the lovers of literature. There are Marlborough House, Devonshire House, Chesterfield House, Lansdowne House, Strawberry Hill and Cambridge House, whose history and associations go back at least to the times of Elizabeth and of James, but none of them calls up so many striking scenes, incidents and brilliant notabilities as Holland House, and none of them is so deeply impressed upon our literature.

Celebrated as it was in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was in the first half of the nineteenth century that it reached its greatest fame and became known the world over.

In its earlier period it had witnessed the conferences of Cromwell and Ireton; in its library

Addison had studied and written, and in one of its stately chambers he died serenely in his Christian faith. In 1749 it passed into the possession of Henry Fox, who became the first Baron Holland, and here the infancy and youth of Charles James Fox were passed, and later it descended to Henry Richard, the third Baron Holland, who took possession of it in 1796. The next year he married the divorced wife of Sir Godfrey Webster, he himself being the co-respondent in the case. It is to them that Holland House owes its greatest fame.

Lady Holland was the daughter and heiress of a rich West Indian planter named Richard Vassall, and was born in Jamaica in 1770. It has been said there was a trace of African blood in her veins. She was a woman of rare beauty, and Macaulay, who did not know her until she was past sixty, wrote to his sister that she was "a large, bold-looking woman, with the remains of a fine person and the air of Queen Elizabeth."

In another place he says "she must have been a most beautiful woman."

Like Lady Blessington, she was not received in English society, although a few high dames, such as the Duchess of Devonshire and Lady Lansdowne, occasionally visited her, but at her

table and in her drawing-rooms were to be seen the most eminent men of Great Britain, as well as the most distinguished visitors to London from other parts of the world.

For more than forty years the most princely hospitality was dispensed by Lord and Lady Holland, and the memoirs, correspondence and recollections of the period preserve the record of it with a fulness and completeness that is unparalleled. It seems as if every person who was ever entertained at Holland House felt it his bounden duty to tell about it, and the result is that we have the most charming story of private life that was ever written. Lord Holland was a perfect host, being possessed of an imperturbable temper, unflagging vivacity and spirit, extensive information, sprightly wit, an inexhaustible fund of anecdote and universal toleration and urbanity. Educated in politics and statesmanship by his uncle, Charles James Fox, he achieved distinction in the House of Lords, but was not an orator, though a most excellent debater. For many years he was the bulwark of the Whig party in the House of Lords, that party being for a long time in a hopeless minority. He died in 1840, and the following lines in his handwriting were found on his dressing-table after his death :

Nephew of Fox and friend of Gray,
Enough my meed of fame
If those who deigned to observe me say
I injured neither name.

Lady Holland was of a far different character in many respects, imperious in her manners and eccentric in her actions. But Moore says of her in his journal: "She is a warm and active friend, and I should think her capable of high-mindedness on occasions." Indeed, nobody could be more kind-hearted or sympathetic to friends in trouble or those who were suffering from affliction and wrong. In another place Moore relates that he gave her Byron's "Memoirs" to read in the manuscript, and said that he feared that Byron had mentioned her in an unfair manner somewhere, to which she replied: "Such things give me no uneasiness; I know perfectly my station in the world, and I know all that can be said of me. As long as the few friends that I really am sure of speak kindly of me, all that the rest of the world can say is a matter of complete indifference to me."

Lady Holland was indeed a most remarkable woman, and the anecdotes told of her are innumerable. Imperious as her temper was, she possessed in the most eminent degree the faculty

of drawing out her guests and making them display themselves to the best advantage. She was often abrupt and offensive in her tone to the habitues of her house, and sometimes even to those who were less familiar with her manner. George Ticknor when abroad was frequently at Holland House, and on one occasion he proved more than a match for my lady. Speaking of New England to him, she said that she had understood that the colony had in the beginning been a convict settlement. He replied that he was not aware of the fact, but that in the King's Chapel, Boston, there was a monument to one of the Vassalls, some of whom had been among the early settlers of Massachusetts. This answer discomfited her not a little, but she afterward asked him to send her a drawing of the monument, which he did upon his return home. Macaulay relates how one morning Lady Holland came to breakfast at Rogers' "in so bad a humor that we were all forced to rally and make common cause against her. There was not a person at table to whom she was not rude, and none of us were inclined to submit. Rogers sneered; Sydney made merciless sport of her; Tom Moore looked excessively impertinent; Bobus put her down with simple, straightforward rudeness, and I

treated her with what I meant to be the coldest civility."

This heroic discipline seems to have done the lady some good, for she was most effusive in her kindness to Macaulay afterward, though she never lost her abruptness nor her disposition to keep a tight rein on her guests. To Lord Portchester she said: "I am sorry to hear you are going to publish a poem. Can't you suppress it." Most admirable advice, to be sure, but not consoling to one posing as a poetic genius. In fact, Tom Moore once said that "poets inclined to a plethora of vanity would find a dose of Lady Holland now and then very good for their complaint." Moore himself took the dose not infrequently. She asked him how he could write those vulgar verses about Leigh Hunt, and she criticised "Lalla Rookh" for the reasons it was Eastern and published in quarto. Even to Rogers, one of the greatest of Holland House favorites, she said: "Your poetry is bad enough; so pray be sparing of your prose."

Macaulay, as every one knows, was inclined too often to monopolize the conversation, particularly in the period when he first entered London society. Lady Holland did not permit this at her table and very often checked him in the torrent of his speech. On one occasion she sent her page to

him and asked him to stop talking, as she wanted to listen to Lord Aberdeen. Greville, in his memoirs, relates a most amusing incident of this kind. One evening at Holland House various topics came along, and Macaulay knew more about them than any one else present. Lady Holland did not know that Sir Thomas More had once been Speaker of the House of Commons, so Macaulay told her all about the celebrated interview between Cardinal Wolsey and More, when the latter held the Speaker's chair. The subject being changed, she wanted to know why Sir Thomas Munro, the Governor-General of India, was so distinguished, and Macaulay related all that he had ever said, done, written or thought, till Lady Holland got bored with Sir Thomas and told Macaulay she had enough of him and would have no more. Then the company got upon the fathers of the Church, and Macaulay repeated a sermon of Chrysostom's in praise of the bishop of Antioch, till Lady Holland put an extinguisher upon the subject by asking in a tone of derision: "Pray, Macaulay, what was the origin of the doll? When were dolls first mentioned in history?" But Macaulay was quite equal to the occasion and told how the Roman children had their dolls, which they offered up to Venus as they grew older.

And he quoted from the Latin poets to prove what he said.

But the anecdotes of Lady Holland and her guests would fill pages.

She survived her husband five years, but kept up her brilliant dinner parties to the last. The French statesman Thiers and Lord Palmerston were present at the last she ever gave, in October, 1845. She died the following November. Although a skeptic in religion she met death with serenity and without concern.

HENRY LUTTRELL,

WIT AND POET.

(1765–1851.)

MACAULAY, writing to his sister in 1831 describing a breakfast at Holland House, says:

> Our breakfast party consisted of my lord and lady, myself, Lord Russell and Luttrell. You must have heard of Luttrell. I met him once at Rogers', and I have seen him, I think, in other places. He is a famous wit—the most popular, I think, of all the professed wits—a man who has lived in the highest circles, a scholar and no contemptible poet. He wrote a little volume of verse entitled "Advice to Julia"—not first-rate, but neat, lively, piquant and showing the most consummate knowledge of fashionable life.

At the time this letter was written few men were better known in the world of fashion than Henry Luttrell. One cannot read the story of the early part of the century as we have it in the memoirs and letters of Byron, in the diaries of Moore and Crabb Robinson, and in the reminiscences of Rogers and other celebrities of the time,

without constantly meeting with the name of Henry Luttrell. He was universally known as a most agreeable member of society, as an incorrigible wit and sayer of good things, as a master of epigrams and sententious sayings and as a gentleman of the highest good breeding. He was, besides this, a scholar who knew the niceties of Greek and Latin literature. In the "Noctes Ambrosianae" he is called "one of the most accomplished men in all England—a wit and a scholar." Byron, in conversation with the Countess of Blessington, said: "Of course you know Luttrell; he is the best sayer of good things and the most epigrammatic conversationist I ever met. There is a terseness and wit, mingled with fancy, in his observations that no one else possesses, and no one so peculiarly understands the apropos. Then, unlike most other wits, Luttrell is never obtrusive; even the choicest *bons mots* are only brought forth when perfectly applicable, and they are given in a tone of good breeding which enhances their value."

Henry Luttrell, wit, poet and man about town, for almost fifty years in London, the associate of Rogers, Moore, Campbell and Sydney Smith, a man who in his youth could have known Dr. Johnson, and in his advanced years did know

Thackeray, Dickens, Bulwer and Disraeli, was the natural son of the Earl of Carhampton of Ireland, whose family name was Luttrell. He was born about 1765, and in 1802 came to London, where he was introduced into society by the famous Duchess of Devonshire. In this way he became acquainted with Charles Fox and Samuel Rogers and obtained the entrée to Holland House, most famous of English mansions for hospitality and sociability. It was a society center in London for nearly half a century, and Luttrell was one of its shining lights, whose wit and repartee never failed to flash upon and delight every company where he was present.

From youth to age he lived on terms of the closest intimacy with Samuel Rogers, though they were accustomed to give each other many a sarcastic side-blow and home-thrust. But for years they were almost inseparable, and one of Moore's entries in his diary is: "Luttrell is always at Rogers'." "None of the talkers whom I meet in London society," says Rogers, "can slide into a brilliant thing with such readiness as Luttrell does."

Most of his witticisms are now familiar, through long repetition, but it was he who first said that the climate of London was, "on a fine day, like

looking up a chimney ; on a rainy day, like looking down one."

He disliked monkeys, because they reminded him of his poor relations, and on being asked whether a well-known bore had made himself very disagreeable, his reply was " that he was as disagreeable as the occasion would permit."

Luttrell wrote occasional *vers de société*, but his principal poem is " Advice to Julia," an imitation of Horace in Hudibrastic verse. It is an amplification of the ode to Lydia in the first book of Horace, in which that lady is enjoined by the poet not to ruin Sybaris by holding him too tightly bound to her apron strings.

Julia is the heroine, a young widow of something over twenty, whose lover is Charles, a man of fashion and pleasure, embarrassed by debt but still at the head of the *bon-ton*. Julia is rich and spoiled by flattery, and intends to marry her admirer at her own good will and pleasure, but meanwhile subjects him to all the tyranny of caprice and coquetry. The object of the poet is to remonstrate with the lady, and in doing so he discourses generally on English fashionable life, and carries his reader from Almacks to Newmarket, and from Brighton to Paris. It is a picture of frivolity true enough to the time, but

a little too tedious for modern readers. In its own time it was called "Letters From a Dandy to a Dolly," and one complaint against it was that besides being too long it was not "broad enough." Most assuredly it is decorous and may be read by anybody anywhere and modesty moult no feather. The main objection is that unless we are intensely curious concerning the fashionable manners of the time we cannot get up interest enough to read it through.

The following lines have been admired for their lightness and neatness of touch on John Bull's special weakness:

> Oh that there might in England be
> A duty on hypocrisy!
> A tax on humbug, an excise
> On solemn plausibilities.
> A stamp on every man that canted!
> No—millions more, if these were granted,
> Henceforward would be raised or wanted.

LADY BLESSINGTON.

(1789–1849.)

THERE are perhaps not many persons in these days who remember much about the old "Annuals," "Keepsakes," "Books of Beauty," "Literary Souvenirs," "Friendship's Offerings" and "Amulets" in which our grandmothers delighted. They have long ceased to be, both in England and America, what they once were—the literary events of the year, having for contributors and editors some of the most prominent authors of the day. Macaulay's stirring ballad, "The Armada," first appeared in "Friendship's Offering" for 1834; and Tom Moore, Tennyson, Bulwer, Disraeli, Barry Cornwall, Thackeray and many another distinguished writer of the time did not disdain to lend their pens to lighten the sometimes dull pages of these annuals. Poe, Irving, Longfellow, Lowell, and Bryant were contributors to similar publications on this side of the Atlantic, while the best artists of the time

gave beauty and grace to the engravings that adorned the volumes.

They have long since disappeared—"gone with the snows of yester-year"—but once in awhile one runs across an odd volume, and it most assuredly awakens reflections. Here is one, for instance, lately met with that has traveled many a league from its place of publication, and possibly spent many a long year in devious wanderings. It is "The Book of Beauty" for 1834, with a portrait of Lady Blessington for the frontispiece and verses to that celebrated lady written by Letitia Elizabeth Landon—the famous "L. E. L." in literary history. It is a flattering tribute, if not great poetry, as a few quotations will show:

The Book of Beauty, lady bright!
Is just the book where thou shouldst write;
For who so beautiful as thou?
Fair queen of the transcendent brow!
As Byron says, from that fair page
Time would withhold the trace of age.

* * * * * *

Meanwhile mayst thou be gay and hearty,
The life of many an evening party;
Contriving skilfully to mix
Arts, letters, fashions, politics;
With just enough of frequent scandal
To give to wit a shining handle.

Few names are more familiar to the general readers of English literature and of the literary gossip that appeared in the second quarter of the nineteenth century than that of Lady Blessington. For twenty years she was the queen of London literary society and her salon became one of the most celebrated of any ever known in England. In her drawing-rooms were to be seen the most eminent and distinguished men in literature, art, science and politics, such as Landor, Bulwer, Disraeli, Tom Moore, Thomas Campbell, Captain Marryat, Barry Cornwall, Dickens, Thackeray, Wellington, Brougham, Sir Robert Peel, Canning, Lyndhurst, Sir Thomas Lawrence, Maclise, Landseer, Haydon and hosts of lesser lights.

In that brilliant society Lady Blessington was the bright and central star, and by her peerless charm, her social graces, her wit, her conversational powers, her never-failing kindness of heart and her tact she won the admiration if not the affection of all her guests. As the hostess of Gore House she rivaled Lady Holland, who bore sway at Holland House, and had this advantage: that while Holland House was entirely a Whig center, Gore House was unpartisan and famous Whigs and Tories of the day met together in amity as on a neutral ground. Both Lady

Blessington and Lady Holland were women with a past, and for that reason found but little favor with fashionable leaders of their own sex; but they could easily dispense with this when welcoming the celebrities that thronged their drawing-rooms.

N. P. Willis in his "Pencilings by the Way" describes Lady Blessington as she was in 1834, when he first met her in London, and says that the portrait in the "Book of Beauty" is not unlike her, but does not do her justice. He calls her "One of the most lovely and fascinating women I have ever known."

When we consider the romance of her career and the celebrity of so many of her friends, it seems strange that her name, but little more than half a century after her death, should have so nearly reached oblivion. Her story, indeed, has few parallels even in fiction. She was the second daughter of an Irish squireen, one of the most reckless and unprincipled of his type, named Edmund Power. She was born near Clonmel, in Ireland, in 1789, and her childhood and girlhood were passed in misery. Her early years gave but little promise of her future beauty, and but little hope of that luxury which subsequently surrounded her.

When she was barely fifteen her father forced her to marry Captain Maurice Farmer, whom she did not love and who gave way to such ungovernable fits of passion that he was generally supposed to be insane. After three years of married life that became more and more unendurable, she fled from him and refused ever after to live with him.

Notwithstanding the trials and sufferings she had experienced, her beauty now developed, and at eighteen she was esteemed the most beautiful woman in Dublin. Her portrait, painted by Sir Thomas Lawrence at this time, testifies to this judgment. Naturally she was not wanting in lovers, and she entered into a union with a Captain Jenkins, who would have married her had not the obstacle of a living husband prevented it. She was accepted by his family as his legal wife. Later she became acquainted with the Earl of Blessington, an Irish peer with an income of thirty thousand pounds a year.

Shortly after this Captain Farmer, while in a drunken debauch, jumped out of a window and broke his neck, and thus released the beauty from her marriage bonds. Thereupon the Earl of Blessington made her his countess, healing the wounded affections of Captain Jenkins with a cheek for ten thousand pounds.

The marriage took place in 1818, when Lady Blessington was in the perfection of her extraordinary beauty. Her sordid and equivocal past was over and her dazzling career began.

After years of poverty and straitened means, she now found herself surrounded by every imaginable luxury that almost unlimited wealth could purchase. The Earl of Blessington was a man of princely habits, a lover of the arts and of the intellectual as well as the more sensual pleasures of life. He bought pictures and gems and snuff-boxes and all manner of curious things, and his London mansion became noted for its magnificence and luxury. But London society looked askance at Lady Blessington's past, and she persuaded her husband to go abroad for a time. Two of her first and best books, "Travels in France" and "Travels in Italy," were the result of this expatriation. It was at Genoa, Italy, they met Lord Byron, with whom an intimacy was maintained during their sojourn. Lady Blessington preserved notes of her conversations with Lord Byron which she afterward published, and a very agreeable book it is to read. Until his death four years later Lord Byron corresponded with her.

At Florence her friendship with Walter Savage

Landor began, and this was only terminated with her death. "The old pagan," as Carlyle calls him, was one of Lady Blessington's sincerest and most steadfast admirers. His letters to her show how implicitly he made her his confidant, for he, too, had his troubles and his miseries.

In Paris Lord Blessington set up an establishment of great magnificence, but he did not live long enough to enjoy it. He died in 1829, leaving his countess her jointure only of twenty-five hundred pounds a year and his London mansion.

Meantime the Count d'Orsay had married the daughter of the Earl of Blessington by his first wife, and D'Orsay thus became a part of the Blessington household. Into that episode it is not necessary to enter here.

After the death of the earl, Lady Blessington returned to London, and the Blessington mansion being too expensive to maintain on her present income, she took Gore House, where she held sway for nearly twenty years. To eke out her income she wrote several books and contributed to the annuals and magazines of the day. After some years the income from the Blessington estate failed her, and she soon became swamped in debt. On this account she and the Count

d'Orsay were at last compelled to fly from England. This was early in 1849.

Gore House and its magnificent treasures went to the hammer and were sacrificed at a tithe of their value. Her exile proved to be of short duration. She died suddenly in Paris, June 4, 1849. She was in her sixtieth year.

FELICIA HEMANS.

(1794–1835.)

Few poets have been more popular in their lifetime than Felicia Hemans, nor is she yet entirely forgotten. She has and in all probability will retain that literary fame that goes with school books, and as long as boys declaim the story of "Casabianca," or "The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers," so long will her name be a household word. Her more ambitious writings, her plays and stories in verse are forgotten, but her name is associated with some of the best-remembered lyrics in the language and they still keep her memory green.

Of her longer poems "The Forest Sanctuary" may be read even in these days with something more than a languid interest, and it contains one very sweet song that has long held its place in our hymn-books.

Ave Sanctissima !
'Tis nightfall on the sea ;

Ora pro nobis!
Our souls rise to thee.
Watch us while shadows lie
O'er the dim water's spread;
Hear the heart's lonely sigh,
Thine, too, hath bled.

In the *Edinburgh Review* Mr. Jeffrey gave her very high praise, saying:

We do not hesitate to say that she is, beyond all comparison, the most touching and accomplished writer of occasional verses that our literature has yet to boast of.

Professor Wilson, who knew her personally, wrote of her in *Blackwood* in one of his "Noctes." The Ettrick Shepherd says:

It's no in that woman's power, sir, to write ill; for, when a feeling heart and a fine genius foregather in the bosom o' a young matron, every line o' poetry is like a sad or cheerful smile frae her een, and every poem, whatever be the subject, in ae sense a picture o' hersell—sae that a' she writes has an affectin' and endearin' mainnerism and moralism about it, that inspires the thochtfu' reader to say to himself, That's Mrs. Hemans.

To which North replies:

From very infancy, Felicia Dorothea was beloved by the muses. I remember patting her fair head when she was a child of nine years, and versified even then with a touching sweetness about sylphs and fairies.

It was the "Pilgrim Fathers" that made Mrs. Hemans so popular in this country. It aroused the enthusiasm of New England, and in those days New England was the literary center of the continent, if not of the universe. Her poems were edited and published by Professor Andrews Norton of Harvard and reviewed by George Bancroft in the *North American Review*, and Americans going abroad made pilgrimages to her home in Wales, often to her annoyance. But there were some American friendships that she greatly treasured, as her correspondence with Dr. Channing and Professor Norton shows.

The Bostonians offered her a liberal salary to remove to Boston and take charge of a magazine, but this she declined.

Mrs. Lydia H. Sigourney, who was her American contemporary, praised her in verse.

> Every unborn age
> Shall mix thee with its household charities;
> The hoary sire shall bow his deafened ear,
> And greet thy sweet words with his benison;
> The mother shrine thee as a vestal flame
> In the lone temples of her sanctity;
> And the young child who takes thee by the hand
> Shall travel with a surer step to heaven.

Mrs. Hemans wrote several plays, the principal

one being "The Vespers of Palermo," which was brought out at Covent Garden theater by Charles Kemble in 1823. Sir Walter Scott also interested himself in its production in Edinburgh, writing an epilogue for it, but it was not successful.

She was a voluminous writer, her works comprising seven volumes.

Felicia Dorothea Browne was born in Liverpool on the 25th of September, 1794, the daughter of an Irish merchant in business there. When she was still a child her father failed, and the family removed to a wild and sequestered part of Wales, where by the seashore the young Felicia grew up with her brothers and sisters, learning the myths and folk lore of that wild locality and having access to an excellent library. She early displayed high intellectual ability, devoured old romances, studied Latin, French, German, Spanish, and Portuguese; played the harp and piano, and wrote verses. During the Napoleonic wars she wrote a poem of some length entitled "England and Spain," which met with some success and was translated into Spanish.

At the age of eighteen she met Captain Hemans of the British army and they were married. After living together six years, during which time she had five sons, Captain Hemans went to reside in

Italy and never returned to England. Husband and wife corresponded, and he took some interest in the education of his sons, but they never met again. The biographers are silent upon the cause of the separation. She herself led a blameless life and supported her family by her pen. Her closing years were clouded by ill health, and she died in 1835 in her forty-first year.

Miss Jewsberry, the friend of the Carlyles and a writer of more than ordinary talent, knew Mrs. Hemans very well and thus writes of her:

She was totally different from any other woman I had ever seen either in Italy or England. She did not dazzle, she subdued me. Other women might be more commanding, more versatile, more acute, but I never saw one more exquisitely feminine. Her birth, her education, but above all the genius with which she was gifted, combined to inspire a passion for the ethereal, the tender, the imaginative, the heroic—in one word, the beautiful. It was in her a faculty divine, and yet of daily life; it touched all things, but, like a sunbeam, touched them with a golden hue. Anything abstract or scientific was unintelligible and distasteful to her. Her knowledge was extensive and various, but true to the first principles of her nature, it was poetry that she sought in history, scenery, character, and religious belief—poetry that guided all her studies, governed all her thoughts, colored all her conversation. Her nature was at once simple and profound; there was no room in her mind for philosophy, nor in her heart for ambition; the one was filled by imagination, the other by tenderness. Her voice was a sad sweet melody, her gladness

like a burst of sunlight, and if in her depression she resembled night, it was night bearing her stars. She was a muse, a grace, a variable child a dependent woman, the Italy of human beings."

SIR JOHN BOWRING.

MERCHANT, DIPLOMAT, LINGUIST.

(1792–1872.)

A VERY pleasant and chatty book to take up at any time is the "Autobiographical Recollections of Sir John Bowring," a man who did many things in the course of his long life and did them all well. He was the possessor of many accomplishments, a merchant, politician, linguist, poet and diplomatist, who received great honor in his own country, and was not without honor in other lands. He was the writer of many poems and hymns, and one of the latter, at least, "In the Cross of Christ I Glory," has achieved a world-wide fame. A master of many languages, it was his ambition to write the history and give translated specimens of the popular poetry of both the western and the oriental worlds, and though he did not carry out his scheme as he conceived it, he nevertheless made translations from the Chinese, Sanskrit, Cingalese, Spanish, Servian,

Magyar and Russian languages, and many of these have been published in separate volumes. One of the best and most scholarly of these is "Ancient Poetry and Romances of Spain," composed of translations of the oldest popular poetry of that country. It was first published in 1824 and the volumes are now comparatively rare. They are culled from many sources and are not gay, but serious. The following may serve as a specimen. It belongs to the sixteenth century:

Awake, awake, my sleeping soul!
Rouse from thy dreams of hope and fear,
And think, and see
How soon life's moments roll,
How soon the hour of death draws near—
How silently!
How swiftly hurrying joy glides by,
And nought but sorrow's shade remains
Of vanish'd bliss;
And sweeter is the memory
Of other moments' griefs and pains,
Than joy in this.

Our lives are rivers flowing on
To that interminable sea,
The mighty grave;
There go, as there have gone,
All pomp, and pride, and royalty,
Which nought can save.
There roll the mountain's rapid streams,
There rolls the little gentle rill,

There mingle all ;
Lost in that ocean tide, which seems
To swallow, though unsated still,
The great, the small.

It is a long poem, but full of wisdom on the everlasting text of the vanity of human life.

Sir John Bowring was born in Devonshire in 1792, was bred to the business of a merchant, and in pursuit of his commercial projects traveled widely, first throughout Europe and afterward to the Orient. He had a great facility for languages, and early acquired a knowledge of French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, German and Dutch. He afterward added to these of the European languages Swedish, Danish, Russian, Servian, Polish, Bohemian and Magyar.

He was the intimate friend of Jeremy Bentham, and together they founded the *Westminster Review* in 1824, but Bowring soon became the sole editor.

In the next few years he made translations of Spanish, Polish, Magyar, Batavian and Servian popular poetry, and the degree of LL.D. was conferred upon him by the University of Göttingen.

He was also employed from time to time by the English government to investigate financial

questions and the commercial relations between Great Britain and other countries. He served in parliament for several years, and in 1837 traveled in Egypt, Syria and Turkey on another commercial mission for the government. He became consul at Canton and then plenipotentiary to China, and was accredited also to the courts of Japan, Siam, Cochin-China and Korea. In his autobiography he gives a most interesting account of his visit to Siam and to the Philippines. Speaking of the latter he says:

> In these islands Spain possesses a great treasure, and at some future time they will become one of the greatest emporiums of commerce and one of the widest fields for the production of tropical articles.

This was written in 1859. Sir John could not foresee that forty years later those islands would be transferred by Spain to the United States.

Bowring relates anecdotes of the distinguished men with whom he became acquainted, including Scott, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Southey, Bunsen, Lamartine, Louis Philippe, Louis Napoleon and Queen Hortense.

With Tom Hood he was on terms of more than ordinary intimacy, and he received the following lines from the great punster:

To Bowring! man of many tongues
(All over tongues, like rumor),
This tributory verse belongs,
To paint his learned humor.
All kinds of gab he knows, I wis,
From Latin down to Scottish—
As fluent as a parrot is,
But far more Polly-glottish.

No grammar too abstruse he meets,
However dark and verby;
He gossips Greek about the streets,
And often Russ—in urbe.
Strange tongues—whate'er you do them call—
In short the man is able
To tell you what's o'clock in all
The dialects of Babel.

Take him on 'Change—in Portuguese,
The Moorish and the Spanish,
Polish, Hungarian, Tyrolese,
The Swedish or the Danish;
Try him with these, and fifty such,
His skill will ne'er diminish;
Although you should begin in Dutch
And end (like me) in Finnish.

He was certainly a master of many languages, and he says:

In the study of languages for practical purposes I have found that courage in speaking is the best means of advancing. Far more is learnt by the exercise of the tongue, which is necessarily active, than by that of the ear, which is nearly

passive. . . . If languages were learnt as children learn them they would be found easy of acquirement. It is scarcely more difficult to acquire five languages than one, and I have known many instances of five or more languages spoken with equal purity and perfection. The proof of the thorough possession of a language is that you are able to think in it, and that no work of translation goes on in the mind.

He goes on to say that he often dreamed in other languages than English. He was a remarkably interesting character, and his works and recollections are well worth reading. He died in 1872 at the age of eighty, his mental and physical faculties being unimpaired to the last.

THOMAS HOOD.

(1799–1845.)

"The Serious Poems of Thomas Hood" will give the world a chance to appreciate better his greatness as a poet. Thackeray, as we all remember, expressed in terms that none can forget, his just indignation that this noble poet and loving man should have been compelled to play the mountebank for his living instead of illuminating and educating the world by his genius.

So gladly is the world desirous of being amused rather than instructed and elevated that Hood's serious poems are apt to be passed over when collected in the same volume with his comic writings, and, therefore, it is well to have them in this form.

Who can read the following without sympathy and tears?

> We watch'd her breathing through the night,
> Her breathing soft and low,
> As in her breast the wave of life
> Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seem'd to speak,
  So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers
  To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
  Our fears our hopes belied—
We thought her dying when she slept,
  And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad,
  And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed—she had
  Another world than ours.

Hood had the power to touch the heart that few but the greatest writers have had, but he also had an unequaled power to make men laugh. He was a consummate poet and a consummate punster, and the latter aspect of his genius was the most encouraged. It paid him better and he was obliged to yield to the popular demand.

"To make laugh is my calling," he said. "I must jump, I must grin, I must tumble, I must turn language head over heels and leap through grammar."

When he could have written so much that would have been as enduring as anything in our language he was compelled to play the buffoon. It is a pathetic story in many of its aspects, and yet even Hood's fun is a permanent addition to

our literature. As a comic poet he stands alone. Never was there such brilliancy of wit and humor, and as for his puns, they are unrivaled.

Thomas Hood was born in London in 1799, and when still young lost both his father and mother. He received some education at private schools, and was for a time in a merchant's counting-house. He subsequently was an apprentice to the engraving trade, his mother's brother being an eminent engraver of that period. When he was twenty-two he became assistant editor to the once famous *London Magazine*, to which Charles Lamb was a contributor, and in which the essays of "Elia" first appeared. Another famous, or rather infamous, contributor to this same periodical was Wainwright, the poisoner, who wrote under the name of James Weathercock. De Quincey's "Confessions of an Opium Eater" were first written for the *London*.

Hood was connected with this magazine for about three years, and his contributions comprise examples of nearly every kind of writing in which he afterward excelled.

Leaving the magazine, he published "Whims and Oddities," and he became also a contributor to the "Annuals," so popular in those days, copies of which are still heirlooms in old families.

"Eugene Aram" was written for one of these. He spent some five years abroad with his family, and "Up the Rhine," one of the most amusing of the books, was produced during that period. On his return to England he was editor for a time of the *New Monthly Magazine*, and next a periodical of his own, called *Hood's Own* His gains by literature were always small, and his life was a struggle with poverty and disease. And yet he appears to have accepted his lot with serenity, and his domestic life was certainly a very happy one. Broken in health, his last days were soothed by the kindness of Sir Robert Peel, who bestowed upon him and his wife a pension of one hundred pounds. He died in 1845.

We are all familiar whith his humorous poems, with "Ben Battle" and "Faithless Sally Brown," with "Miss Kilmansegg" and "The Tale of a Trumpet" and innumerable others, but save two or three, such as "The Bridge of Sighs" and "The Song of the Shirt," his serious poems are seldom quoted. And yet "The Haunted House," "The Elm Tree," "The Plea of the Midsummer Fairies," and "Eugene Aram" are worthy to be ranked with much that is in Keats or Tennyson. The following from his "Ode to the Moon" is classic in its grace and beauty :

Oh, thou art beautiful, howe'er it be!
Huntress, or Dian, or whatever named;
And he the veriest Pagan, that first framed
A silver idol, and ne'er worship'd thee!—
It is too late—or thou should'st have my knee—
Too late now for the old Ephesian vows,
And not divine the crescent on thy brows!—

Yet, call thee nothing but the mere mild moon,
Behind those chestnut boughs,
Casting their dappled shadows at my feet;
I will be grateful for that simple boon,
In many a thoughtful verse and anthem sweet,
And bless thy dainty face whene'er we meet.

"The Haunted House" was Poe's favorite, and it is superb in its imaginative quality and gloomy fantasy. I can quote but two stanzas:

The moping heron, motionless and stiff,
That on a stone, as silently and stilly,
Stood, an apparent sentinel, as if
To guard the water-lily.

* * * * * *

O'er all these hung a shadow and a fear,
A sense of mystery the spirit daunted,
And said, as plain as whisper in the ear,
The place is haunted.

Few poets have equaled the weird beauty of this poem. "Up the Rhine" is the best of his humorous prose, and, while it is manifestly an im-

itation of "Humphry Clinker," it is an imitation that is equal to the original. It teems with inexhaustible fun. The volume consists of a collection of letters from a family party of tourists. There is Uncle Orchard, Mrs. Wilmot, his widowed sister; the lady's maid, Martha Penny, and Frank Summerville, the nephew, an accomplished man of the world. Martha's description of the storm on the passage across to Holland and her account of the disaster to the bath-house boat on the Rhine are inimitable and would throw an anchorite into convulsions of laughter.

One of the most charming of books for every reader, young and old, is "The Memorials of Thomas Hood," by his son and daughter. It shows this great man in his domestic and professional life, and is an exhibition of courage, love, hope, industry, and self-sacrifice rarely paralleled in our literary history. It is a book to be cordially commended, and whoever reads it will rise from its perusal with a greater appreciation of Thomas Hood, wit, humorist, and poet, than he has ever before known.

WINTHROP M. PRAED.

(1802–1839.)

YEARS, years ago, ere yet my dreams
Had been of being wise or witty;
Ere I had done with writing themes,
Or yawned o'er this infernal Chitty;
Years, years ago, while all my joys
Were in my fowling-piece and filly;
In short, while I was still a boy,
I fell in love with Laura Lilly.

I saw her at the County Ball—
There where the sounds of flute and fiddle
Gave signal sweet in that old hall,
Of hands across and down the middle,
Hers was the subtlest spell by far
Of all that sets young hearts romancing;
She was our queen, our rose, our star,
And then she danced—oh, heaven, her dancing!

* * * * * * *

Our love was like most other loves—
A little glow, a little shiver,
A rosebud and a pair of gloves,
And "Fly Not Yet" upon the river;

Some jealousy of some one's heir,
  Some hopes of dying broken-hearted,
A mystery, a lock of hair,
  The usual vows, and then we parted.

We parted—months and years rolled by,
  We met again four summers after ;
Our parting was all sob and sigh—
  Our meeting was all mirth and laughter ;
For in my heart's most secret cell
  There had been many other lodgers ;
And she was not the ballroom's belle,
  But only—Mrs. Something Rogers !

The name of Winthrop Mackworth Praed is perhaps not as familiar to the general reader as it once was, or as it deserves to be. He was the originator of a style of *vers de société* of which the foregoing, " The Belle of the Ballroom " is an example, and which has found so many imitators that it is now commonplace. He was one of the brilliant young men in the early '20's of the nineteenth century that made Cambridge university noted. He was the contemporary of Macaulay and Charles Austin and their rival in the famous Union Debating society, in which the young men of the university won their first oratorical honors and gave promise of what they might afterwards become in parliament. Macaulay's achievements we all know, but Praed is not so well known.

Winthrop Mackworth Praed was two years younger than Macaulay, having been born in 1802. He was first sent to Eton, where he established a magazine named the *Etonian* that became even more celebrated than the *Microcosm* of Canning and Frere in the preceding generation. It was wholly written by the students, though Praed contributed the larger portion of each number. He was so original both in verse and prose that great things were predicted of him.

Nor did he disappoint expectation. At Cambridge he won medals for Greek verse four times, and for English verse twice. He was the third of his year in the classics, gained a fellowship, and was one of the leading debaters in the Union society.

In one of the early numbers of "Noctes Ambrosianae," then being published in *Blackwood*, Professor Wilson writes: "Macaulay and Praed have written very good prize poems. These two young gentlemen ought to make a figure in the world." We know what Macaulay's fame is, and premature death alone prevented a complete fulfilment of the prediction in respect to Praed.

Both Macaulay and Praed were contributors to *Knight's Quarterly Magazine*, which it will be remembered was Macaulay's stepping stone to

the *Edinburgh Review*. In 1825 Macaulay wrote his essay on Milton that made him famous and opened the road to parliament. At the university Macaulay had been a Tory, a faith that he inherited, and Praed was a Whig. After he left Cambridge Macaulay became a Whig from conviction, and Praed a Tory. After Macaulay's election to parliament in 1830 Praed wrote to his sister:

> The entrance of my friend Macaulay into the great council of the nation gives me, as you will suppose, the greatest pleasure. I cannot but think he will be the greatest man there by and by, and I have bespoken his first frank in the expectation of selling it for ten pounds thirty years hence.

Praed was called to the bar in 1829, taking also a keen interest in politics. When Macaulay's sledge-hammer blows in favor of parliamentary reform became so potent the Tories began to look around for some one to meet him and selected Praed. Offers of a seat in parliament were made to him through a personal friend. Praed wrote about it to his sister.

> The first question put to my friend was whether my intimacy with Macaulay was very close, and the next whether I should in consequence of it be unwilling to be pitted against him (Peel's words) in the house. To both of those questions Fitzgerald answered, as I should have done,

that my friendship with Macaulay was the closest possible, and that I should certainly refuse to occupy any post in which I should be expected to place myself in personal collision with any man.

The negotiation fell through, but a little later Praed obtained a seat in parliament, but took no part in the debates on the Reform Bill in which Macaulay so distinguished himself, nor did these friends ever come in "personal collision."

Praed had a brilliant career in the House of Commons and possessed the confidence and favor of Sir Robert Peel. When the latter came into power, Praed was appointed to a subordinate cabinet position, but soon afterward his health began to fail. He was married in 1835 and died of consumption in 1839 in his thirty-seventh year.

Praed's poetry is graceful, light, airy, and humorous. His political satires are among the best ever written. One of these is entitled "Sleep, Mr. Speaker, Sleep While You May," suggested by his seeing the Speaker of the House of Commons dozing in his chair.

Sleep, Mr. Speaker; it's surely fair,
If you don't in your bed, you should in your chair.
Longer and longer still they grow,
Tory and Radical, Aye and No;
Talking by night and talking by day—
Sleep, Mr. Speaker; sleep, sleep while you may.

Sleep, Mr. Speaker; Cobbett will soon
Move to abolish the sun and moon;
Hume, no doubt, will be taking the sense
Of the house on a saving of thirteen pence;
Grattan will growl or Baldwin bray—
Sleep, Mr. Speaker; sleep, sleep while you may.

His two volumes of verse contain no dull lines.

SIR HENRY TAYLOR.

(1800–1886.)

One of the great poems of the nineteenth century, but one possibly that is not generally read, is "Philip Van Artevelde," by Henry Taylor —Sir Henry Taylor as he in time became. It is in the form of a drama, though not intended for the stage, and indeed unsuitable for it. Everybody can quote one line of it, "The world knows nothing of its greatest men," though probably ignorant of the source of the quotation. But it has hundreds of quotable lines, and is a romance full of beauty and imagery almost Shakespearian. No modern poet has so completely caught the inspiration of the Elizabethans. The scene of the poem is laid in Flanders in the fourteenth century, when the middle or mercantile classes, the wealthy burghers of Ghent and Bruges, revolted against the tyranny of the nobles and refused longer to submit to their exactions. It

was the rebellion of the people against royalty. But the insurgents had not been successful, and they were without a leader. It is at this moment the story begins. Philip Van Artevelde, student and recluse, whose father has already sacrificed his life to the cause, is chosen the leader. He desires to avenge his father's death, but also to save his country. He is portrayed as a grave, sagacious man, not exempt from passion and frailty, and yet of consummate mastery over his followers, a born leader of men. He is a man both of contemplation and action, a warrior and statesman, who follows his aims with relentless tenacity.

He says:

> All my life long
> I have beheld with most respect the man
> Who knew himself, and knew the ways before him,
> And from amongst them chose considerately,
> With a clear foresight, not a blindfold courage,
> And having chosen, with a steadfast mind
> Pursued his purposes.

He is successful for a time, and becomes the regent of Flanders, but at last, in one heroic battle, is overthrown and slain. And yet his enemies can only honor him. The Duke of Burgundy says:

Dire rebel though he was,
Yet with a noble nature and great gifts
Was he endow'd—courage, discretion, wit,
An equal temper and an ample soul,
Rock-bound and fortified against assaults
Of transitory passion, but below
Built on a surging subterranean fire
That stirred and lifted him to high attempts.
So prompt and capable, and yet so calm,
He nothing lacked in sovereignty but the right,
Nothing in soldiership except good fortune.

It is most assuredly a splendid poem, and from the time of its first publication in 1834, has been praised by all classes of readers.

There is no man of letters whose life seems to me to be so enviable as Henry Taylor's. He was devoid of ambition, that "last infirmity of noble minds," and consequently could look upon life with serenity and contentment. He could say, as he did most truthfully in two pleasing stanzas :

It may be folly—they are few
Who think it so—to laugh or blame ;
But single sympathies to me
Are more than fame.

The glen, and not the mountain top,
I love, and though its date be brief,
I snatch the rose you send and drop
The laurel leaf.

He was born in the county of Durham, England, October 18, 1800, the same month and year in which Macaulay was born. He was a younger son, his father being a farmer, but notably fond of books and study. Henry was educated at home, browsing at large in his father's library—not a bad way of bringing up boys. At fourteen he tried a year at sea as a midshipman, but returned cured. Until he was twenty-one or twenty-two he read, studied and wrote both poetry and prose at home, and one day sent an article reviewing "Moore's Melodies" to the *Quarterly Review*. It was accepted, and he concluded to adopt a literary life. He went to London to pursue that calling, made a good impression on the friends he had introductions to, and through the kind offices of Sir Henry Holland, obtained an appointment as clerk in the British Colonial office with an excellent salary. This gave him an opportunity to cultivate the muses without having to think much about his daily bread. He entered this office in January, 1824, and remained continuously in the service, receiving promotions, of course, until September, 1872. During this long and unostentatious civil career he proved to be one of the most valued of public servants, and the great officials, nominally over him, constantly advised

with him in regard to affairs in his department. In his fortieth year he married a daughter of Lord Monteagle, and his domestic life proved very happy. At the age of sixty-five he commenced writing his autobiography, which he brought down to the year 1875. It was published in 1885, and is a most charming book, which I can heartily recommend to all my readers. He died a year later at the age of eighty-six. It was his good fortune to know all the men best worth knowing in England during his lifetime, and his autobiography and letters give many pleasing glimpses of them.

What strikes one most in his career is the calmness and serenity of the man. His works show that he was a man of extraordinary ability, and he was so regarded by all who knew him. His chief prose work is "The Statesman," which is full of all that sort of knowledge that a politician should have in order to gain power. He was himself a far-seeing statesman and man of affairs. Had he so minded, he could have won great distinction, if not permanent renown, in the field of English politics. And yet he deliberately evaded it, and continued a mere subordinate official through life. In 1878, after he had retired, he wrote to Lady Russell:

Your mother may think I am a Tory, because I voted for a man of that party in the last election. It was the only occasion on which I ever did vote for anybody, and at the next election I mean to vote for a man of the other party; the character of the man, and not the party which he belongs to, being in both cases the ground of my vote.

After the publication of "Van Artevelde," Taylor's fame as a poet was established. The felicitous subject, the exquisite style, the picturesqueness of the story, and the striking aphorisms attracted wide attention and fame, and it has held its place very well in England even to this day. As late as 1875 Taylor wrote to Lady Pollock: "Old 'Philip' goes on just as he has done for forty years, selling about two hundred copies per annum." In 1877 he published a complete revised edition of all his works. They are contained in six volumes. Other dramatic poems of his are "Isaac Comnenus," "Edwin, the Fair," and "The Virgin Widow." The last two have considerable merit, though the scene of them is laid in the least poetic part of Anglo-Saxon history.

"Van Artevelde," however, is about all that is worth reading of these volumes. It is the highest literature, and will long preserve the name of Henry Taylor.

JOANNA BAILLIE,

A FORGOTTEN DRAMATIST.

(1762–1851.)

Every now and then we see the name of Joanna Baillie mentioned, and the wonder is expressed if any of her once celebrated works are now read.

It is extremely doubtful, except by the very curious and the very persistent, but there was a time when her works were in the hands of everybody and her fame overshadowed that of Wordsworth and Coleridge, of Southey and Shelley.

Walter Scott declared her to be second to Shakespeare, and Byron said she was the only woman who had ever written tragedy.

Scott, Southey, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Lamb, Byron, Shelley, and Keats were her contemporaries, and all joined in praising her. In the early years of the nineteenth century she was considered greater than any of these, not only by the public at large, but by the critics. She survived them

all, and saw her own writings disappear from public view and be forgotten, like herself, while the works of those to whom she was considered so superior have become the imperishable treasures of the language.

She was born in Scotland in 1762 and died in London in 1851 in her eighty-ninth year, having long survived her contemporaries, her dramas, and her fame.

It was in 1799, when Miss Baillie was in her thirty-seventh year, that a volume entitled "A Series of Plays" was published anonymously. It contained two tragedies, one entitled "Basil" and the other "De Montfort," and a comedy entitled "The Tryal."

In the introduction the author explained that these plays formed a portion of an extensive plan hitherto unattempted in any language, and that was a series of plays the chief object of which should be the delineation of all the higher passions of the human heart—each play exhibiting in the principal character some one great passion in all the stages of its development from its origin to its catastrophe.

The volume attracted immediate attention; in fact, created a sensation. It was considered a most notable event in the annals of the drama,

and curiosity was excited as to the authorship. The sensation became all the greater when it was discovered that these vigorous and original compositions were written by a young woman of quiet and retiring life, whose most intimate friends had never suspected in her such extraordinary powers.

The town rang with her praises, and Walter Scott in the introduction to the third canto of "Marmion" paid a beautiful tribute to her genius, describing her as the "bold enchantress" who seized the harp of Avon,

> Which silent hung
> By silver Avon's holy shore,
> Till twice an hundred years roll'd o'er;
> When she, the bold enchantress, came,
> With fearless hand and heart on flame!
> From the pale willow snatch'd the treasure,
> And swept it with a kindred measure,
> Till Avon's swans, while rung the grove
> With Montfort's hate and Basil's love,
> Awakening at the inspired strain,
> Deem'd their own Shakespeare lived again.

Mrs. Barbauld, writing to a friend, relates how amazed she was to find that the author of the plays was not one of the already celebrated writers to whom they had been attributed, but "Miss Baillie, a young lady of Hampstead, whom she

visited, and who came to Mr. Barbauld's meeting all the while, with as innocent a face as if she had never written a line."

Miss Baillie was now one of the celebrities of London. The world of fashion and of gayety lionized her. Famous men paid honor to her, and Sheridan, the manager of Drury Lane theater, insisted on producing "De Montfort." John Philip Kemble and his sister, Mrs. Siddons, were then at the height of their fame, and they appeared in the leading parts. Never was public expectation wrought up to a higher pitch, and the critics foretold a new era in dramatic literature.

In April, 1800, the piece was produced, but in spite of the transcendent acting it failed. The play was not quite damned, but when the curtain fell there was a genuine sigh of relief. After a run of eleven nights the piece was withdrawn.

"De Montfort" illustrates the passion of hatred, but the hero is a bore. He hates Rezenvelt, but the motive is far from sufficient to account for such an all-comprehensive hatred as De Montfort shows. The tempers of the two men are uncongenial, they have been rivals from boyhood, and Rezenvelt, in a duel with De Montfort, disarms him and spares his life. This simply intensifies the latter's hatred, and in the dénouement

De Montfort murders Rezenvelt, and then commits suicide by dashing his head against a pillar.

This climax has been so long foreseen and is so tedious in coming that the spectators yawn over it and feel glad when it is all over.

Nevertheless, the play reads so well that people still wondered why it could not be represented on the stage. There must be something wrong, they thought, in the theater when plays that read so well as Miss Baillie's could not be exhibited on the stage.

When Edmund Kean was in his prime he undertook to bring out "De Montfort." Some alterations were made and Miss Baillie rewrote the last act. Expectation was again awakened a second time, and Drury Lane was again crowded. But even Kean's superb genius could not avail to arouse interest in the ponderous though often sonorous lines. Three nights sufficed to satisfy Miss Baillie's admirers that her tragedies were not for the stage.

Miss Baillie wrote eight tragedies, five comedies, and a musical drama, each exemplifying some one overmastering passion of the heart, as love, hatred, fear, jealousy, and ambition. But there is not enough of a story theme to make the portrayal interesting. The characters are clearly

drawn, the dialogue is natural, the lines are poetic, but they all lead nowhere. The plots are meager and even vapid, and much as one may admire them in the study they are unsuited for dramatic representation.

Besides the "Plays on the Passions" Miss Baillie wrote a number of other plays, as well as some poems of a high degree of merit. A poem to her sister, "Lines to Agnes Baillie on Her Birthday," has always been much admired.

She was a dear and lovely lady, a woman of undoubted genius, who lived gracefully into extreme old age beloved by all who knew her.

Francis Jeffrey always went to see her when he visited London. In one of his letters to his wife, written in 1842, he says:

> We went to Hampstead and paid a very pleasant visit to Joanna Baillie, who is marvelous in health and spirits and youthful freshness and simplicity of feeling, and not a bit deaf, blind, or torpid.

She was then in her eightieth year.

JANE AUSTEN,

(1765–1817,)

AND

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

(1767–1849.)

Sir Walter Scott was the Homer of modern novel writers, but great as he was, he was always glad to acknowledge his obligations to two women of genius, who pointed out the way for him. It was Miss Edgeworth's sketches of Irish character that first led him to think that he might do for Scotland what she had done for Ireland; and it was Miss Austen's novels of English life and manners that further challenged him to exertion in the same field. Of both these famous writers he was a lifelong admirer, and he often admitted that he could not equal them in the finer touches that portray character. Of course that was his modest way of putting the matter, for time has placed

the seal of fame on all his works, and has been disposed to slight theirs. Nevertheless, in the development of modern literature, Maria Edgeworth and Jane Austen are entitled to a high and honorable place. In one place Scott says: "Edgeworth, Ferrier, Austen, have all given portraits of real society far superior to anything man—vain man—has produced of a like nature."

In his diary, under date of March 14, 1826, he writes:

> Read again, for the third time at least, Miss Austen's finely written novel of "Pride and Prejudice." That young lady had a talent for describing the involvements, and feelings, and characters of ordinary life, which is to me the most wonderful I ever met with. The big wow wow strain I can do myself, like any now going; but the exquisite touch which renders ordinary, commonplace things and characters interesting, from the truth of the description and the sentiment, is denied me. What a pity such a gifted creature died so early!

Macaulay has an entry in his diary also:

> I have now read once again all Miss Austen's novels—charming they are. There are in the world no compositions which approach nearer to perfection."

Jane Austen's first novel, "Pride and Prejudice," was written in 1796, when she was in her twenty-first year, and was followed at considerable intervals by "Sense and Sensibil-

ity," "Northanger Abbey," Mansfield Park," "Emma," and "Persuasion." The last appeared in 1816, one year before the author's death. She wrote also one or two shorter tales. This comprises her literary work during a space of twenty years.

The word of culture at the present moment is Jane Austen—the "Divine Jane." Somewhat recently two prominent publishing houses have vied with each other in producing handsome editions of the novels, and in the last decade three or four biographies of her have appeared. But there was a time when her name and works were in eclipse. The generation that was brought up on the novels of Thackeray, Dickens, Bulwer, Charlotte Bronté, and their contemporaries, had no time to read the favorite novels of their fathers, and so Miss Austen passed out of fashion. From 1840 well down into the eighties, it was only the omnivorous readers that searched out the famous stories of the early part of the century. But now they are in fashion once more, and a very good and happy fashion it is.

Miss Austen was the daughter of an English country clergyman, and the greater part of her life was passed at the rectory of Steventon. She spent a few seasons at Bath, the famous English water-

ing place, where she obtained that knowledge of fashionable life so admirably portrayed in the novels. Her life was uneventful, and she does not appear to have had any love affair to vary its monotony. She died in 1817 in her forty-third year.

As a novelist, Miss Austen's power is dramatic. The adventures she relates are not particularly exciting, and if a reader is in search of sensations he will yawn many times over these pages. Her heroes are clergymen and her heroines rather sentimental girls, and the scenes such as English country life afforded a hundred years ago. And yet few writers, perhaps none save the one master of all, have ever held the mirror up to nature as she does. Her range of observation was necessarily narrow, but her art is perfect, and her literary workmanship unexcelled. She was the mistress of genteel comedy, but never indulged in caricature. She tells a story of human life, and we follow the actions of her characters as we follow those of our friends and neighbors. We see a picture of human life not exaggerated, not unduly moralized upon, but precisely what we might see any day if we were good observers. Vice, folly, meanness, pomposity, egotism and selfishness, as well as virtue and goodness, are all visible, but

are not made texts for sermons. Miss Austen never preaches. She indulges in no colloquies with her readers, or calls attention in stage asides to her meaning. She leaves us to point a moral if we choose, or we may look upon an exquisite portrayal of human life, and be content. Such is Shakespeare's art, and such is Jane Austen's.

Miss Edgeworth has not been quite so fortunate in winning modern attention. "Castle Rackrent," and "The Absentee," "Patronage," "Belinda" and "Ormond," are the names of novels once familiar to every household, but now rarely opened even by the most insatiable of novel readers. They contain a great variety of characters, abound with humor, and are a most accurate study of the life and manners of Ireland in the beginning of the nineteenth century. They were great favorites with Macaulay, whose diary contains many references to them. One of the scenes in "The Absentee" he declares to be one of the finest of its kind in all fiction. King Corny is one of the principal characters in "Ormond," and in a note to a passage in his history, where he describes the habits of the old native Irish landlords of the seventeenth century, Macaulay says, "Miss Edgeworth's King Corny belongs to a later and much more civilized generation, but whoever has studied that

admirable portrait can form some notion of what King Corny's great-grandfather must have been."

Maria Edgeworth was born January 1, 1767, at Black Bourton in England. Her father, Richard Lovell Edgeworth, owned an estate at Edgeworthtown, Ireland, and when Maria was sixteen, the family went there to reside, and it was her home for the remainder of her life. Mr. Edgeworth was an eccentric person, of no marked intellectual power, but he was a most admirable father. The strongest bond of sympathy and affection existed between him and his oldest daughter, and throughout life they had a community of habits, affection and modes of thought. He possessed great talent as an educator, and he gave his daughter the most bracing kind of an education. He had many other children, for he was four times married, but Maria was his favorite. From all the accounts we have of him, he was a good husband, a good father, a good landlord, and a very excellent man. Byron mentions the Edgeworths in his journal. He says:

I had been the lion in 1812; Miss Edgeworth and Madame De Staël, with the Cossack, toward the end of 1813, were the exhibitions of the succeeding year. I thought Edgeworth a fine old fellow, of a clarety, elderly, red complexion, but active, brisk and endless. He was seventy, but did not look fifty—no, not forty-eight even."

Maria was early encouraged by her father to write essays and tales, chiefly for the amusement of her younger brothers and sisters. In 1796, the same year that saw the appearance of Miss Austen's first novel, the first volume of stories by Miss Edgeworth was also published. It was called "Parent's Assistant." I wonder if the young people of to-day still read those famous stories. That and Peter Parley's stories are among my first juvenile recollections, but that was before the days of Oliver Optic and Louisa Alcott. For three-quarters of a century, however, "Parent's Assistant" was the chief juvenile book in England and America, and if it is not in vogue now, it ought to be. John Ruskin, in writing to his young readers concerning dress and like topics, advises them to read "Parent's Assistant," and particularly the story of "Simple Susan."

"Castle Rackrent" was the first of Miss Edgeworth's novels, and was published in 1800. It is full of Irish humor and depicts the manners and habits of the Irish people in the eighteenth century. It has been translated into most of the European languages.

Novel after novel followed from her pen in swift succession, for she was a far more voluminous writer than Miss Austen, but those whose

names I have given above, are her chief works and her title to a place in English literature.

Unlike Miss Austen, Miss Edgeworth had one rather prim love affair toward middle life. It was with a Swedish gentleman, belonging to the diplomatic service, the Chevalier Edelcrantz, whom she met in Paris. He became deeply attached to her, and offered his hand. After some deliberation she refused him, being reluctant to leave her friends and country to live in Sweden. She never appears to have repented her decision. After a long and happy life she died in 1849, in her eighty-third year.

JANE PORTER.

(1776–1850.)

THERE are not many novel readers who have not wept over the misfortunes of Thaddeus of Warsaw or mourned over the sad but heroic fate of Sir William Wallace and his much-loved Marion. It is to be confessed that these famous works are not the highest literature, that they are at times unnecessarily minute in detail and that the heroes suffer themselves to become involved in difficulties that a few words of explanation might have averted; nevertheless, if we may judge from the returns of circulating libraries, they are as popular to-day as when first published, nearly a hundred years ago.

And there is this further to be said, that whatever they may be as literature, they are the first of the English historical novels. It is part of Miss Porter's fame that she "held the candle" for Sir Walter Scott. The Irish sketches of Miss Edgeworth first led him to think of portray-

ing Scottish life and scenery, but "Thaddeus of Warsaw" suggested to him also the idea of interweaving history with them. It was therefore with no small pride that Miss Porter in the preface to the tenth edition of "Thaddeus," published in 1833—the first was published in 1803—spoke of Sir Walter Scott, "who did me the honor to adopt the style or class of novel of which 'Thaddeus of Warsaw' was the first, a class which, uniting the personages and facts of real history or biography with a combining and illustrative machinery of the imagination, formed a new species of writing in that day, and to which Mme. de Staël and others have given the appellation of an epic in prose."

The misfortunes of Poland are no longer very real to us, but in the times of our grandfathers they aroused the sympathy of the civilized world. When Miss Porter wrote, General Thaddeus Kosciuszko was the renowned hero of two hemispheres, for he had gained distinction in the American war for independence, and had later, with heroic bravery, been the leader in two revolts of Poland against Russia. Overwhelmed by superior forces, he became an exile, with thousands other of his countrymen, from his native land. In her girlhood Miss Porter saw many of these hapless

refugees wandering in the parks and streets of London. She became familiar with the name of Kosciuszko, and her imagination was fired by his patriotism and valor. He became her ideal and the hero of her first novel. She did not use his name, but made her Thaddeus a descendant of the great John Sobieski. The story had immense popularity and was translated into several European languages. It fell into General Kosciuszko's hands and he wrote a grateful letter to the author concerning it. He afterward presented her with a medal which had been struck in his honor, together with a lock of his hair. She received also other testimonials of regard from unknown Poles, while the Teutonic order of St. Joachim elected her a canoness, and bestowed upon her a gold cross. The novel has passed through innumerable editions in many languages. The tenth English edition was dedicated to Kosciuszko.

"The Scottish Chiefs," was published in 1810 —four years before "Waverley." The hero of this story, as all the world knows, is Sir William Wallace, and its theme the liberty of Scotland. Mr. Marlborough learned the history of England from Shakespeare's plays, so it may be said that three generations of readers have learned all they know of the history of Scottish liberty from

Miss Porter's romance. Sir William, in Miss Porter's hands, was rather an idealized being, and much too soft and gentle for his time. The rude and courageous Scots, that finally under Bruce overcame Edward at Bannockburn, were not much given to sentimentality. Nevertheless the outlines of the romance are true to history. The story met with wide success, and perhaps became more popular in the United States than elsewhere, It is said that Napoleon did it the honor to exclude it from his domains, though for what particular reason one is at something of a loss to know. It is a story of adventure and war, with plenty of good fighting in it, those old heroes being ever ready with their claymores and their daggers. Most of the characters are historic, and taking it altogether it is a good novel and a good history.

Miss Porter's chief works after those mentioned are "The Pastor's Fireside," "Duke Christian of Luneburg," "Coming Out" and "The Field of Forty Footsteps." These works have long been out of print and are now to be rarely met with.

In 1831 a book was published that aroused great curiosity and met with wide success. It was entitled "Sir Edward Seaward's Narrative of His Shipwreck and Consequent Discovery of

Certain Islands in the Caribbean Sea; with a Detail of Many Extraordinary and Highly Interesting Events in His Life, from the Year 1733 to 1749; as Written in His Own Diary, Edited by Miss Jane Porter." The book had the same kind of interest as "Robinson Crusoe" and "The Swiss Family Robinson." It tells of a shipwreck and the rescue of Sir Edward and his family. They are cast upon an uninhabited island—a group of them, indeed, called the Leeward Islands—and spend a number of years there. They enjoy many comforts and pleasures, and indulge in much piety. The book is written with all the realism of Robinson Crusoe, and it set a great many people rummaging among maps and records to find the exact latitude of those islands.

The *Quarterly* received the book with much praise, but at the end the critic said that "after elaborate searches among Admiralty records and maps, we are compelled to state that, notwithstanding its solemn and almost sacred character, it is neither more nor less than pure, unmingled fiction from first to last." This made great fun for Miss Porter, who when pressed as to the real authorship of the book would only reply: "Sir Walter Scott had his great secret; I must be allowed to keep my little one." The book was,

in fact, written by Miss Porter's eldest brother, Dr. Porter, a physician in Bristol. It does not quite rank with the great stories we have likened it to, but no one can read it without becoming very much fascinated with tropical life as it was described on the Leeward Islands.

Jane Porter was born at Hurham, in 1776. She had two older brothers, one of whom afterwards wrote the "Diary of Sir Edward Seaward," and the other, David Ker Porter, became a distinguished English painter and member of the Royal Academy. A younger sister, Anne Marie, was a most versatile and voluminous story writer, writing in all fifty-two novels, in a literary career extending from her twelfth to her fiftieth year. None of these stories is now read, save perhaps occasionally from curiosity, for they do not possess the literary flavor that belong to those of the older sister. When they were children the mother—the father was dead—removed her family to Edinburgh, and there they became acquainted with young Walter Scott, a student, and with Flora Macdonald, a maid from the Highlands, who afterward emigrated to North Carolina. It was in Edinburgh that Jane Porter learned the stories and legends that years later were made a part of "The Scottish Chiefs." In 1790 the

family removed to London, and in a suburb of the metropolis a large portion of Miss Porter's life was passed. There she wrote her novels and received the honors due her genius. Like Miss Aiken, Joanna Baillie and Miss Roche, she long survived her fame, and while her novels were still read she herself was suffered to glide into oblivion. In 1844 a number of American publishers and authors sent her a rosewood armchair, "as a memorial of high and respectful admiration for the author of some of the purest and most imaginative productions in the wide range of English literature."

LADY MORGAN.

"THE WILD IRISH GIRL."

(1777–1859.)

CONTEMPORARY with Miss Edgeworth and Miss Porter, there was one who in some respects was even more noted. This was Lady Morgan, who was sometimes called "The Wild Irish Girl," from the title of her first novel. For fifty years, or nearly that, she was a distinguished figure in literary and social circles in Dublin and London, and her name is frequently to be met in the diaries and letters of Byron, Moore, Rogers, Campbell, Scott and others of the immortals. She was a woman of genius, warm-hearted and affectionate, with some foibles and affectations. She wrote novels and books of travel, her acquaintance was courted by many of the most eminent persons of the time, and her memoirs, autobiography and correspondence show the terms of intimacy on which she lived with them. She at

one time divided the honors of popularity among the masses with the mighty O'Connell himself, if we may judge by the ballads of the day, one of which runs in part as follows :

Och, Dublin City, there is no doubtin',
Bates every city upon the say :
'Tis there you'll hear O'Connell spoutin'
And Lady Morgan makin' tay.
For 'tis the capital o' the finest nation,
Wid charmin' pisantry on a fruitful sod,
Fightin' like divils for conciliation,
An' hatin' each other for the love o' God.

Sydney Owenson, who became Lady Morgan, was the eldest daughter of an Irish land steward originally named MacOwen, who became stage-struck, changed his name to Owenson and went to London to rival Garrick in the play of "Tamerlane." He was not successful in the metropolis, but being a handsome and dashing Irishman starred the provinces and wound up by making a runaway match with a certain Miss Hill. They lived the life of strolling players for a time and Sydney was born on shipboard between England and Ireland, in 1777. Her childhood was passed in theaters and among actors, and she received what education a strolling player could give his child.

She was, however, vivacious and ambitious,

eager to improve her mind, high-spirited and independent. She grew up in Dublin, where she first knew Tom Moore, and a little later John Wilson Croker, her lifelong enemy. When her father failed as a theatrical manager she supported him and her sister—her mother being dead—by taking a situation as governess. She began also to scribble verses and novels, and in 1806 published "The Wild Irish Girl," which met with great success.

Glorvina is the name of the heroine of the story, a name by which the author was generally called afterward by her friends. The main incident of the story is a chapter of her own experience. A youth falls violently in love with the heroine, but he is dependent on his father, who opposes the marriage. Glorvina has no money, either, and from that point of view is an undesirable match. The father calls upon her to express his objections to the marriage, and Glorvina replies with great spirit that she has no intention of marrying the young man. During the interview she expresses herself so well, and is withal so beautiful and cultivated in manner, that the father falls in love with her and offers her his hand and fortune then and there. She declines the proposal and subsequently marries another hero.

She now entered upon a successful literary career and became a prominent figure in Dublin society. Croker, then a young barrister, paid his addresses to her, but she did not like or encourage him. Croker never forgave her, and when a few years later he became connected with the *Quarterly* never lost an opportunity to malign and abuse her. "Have we not seen this lady on stages and at fairs?" he one time asked when reviewing one of her books in the *Quarterly*. Even Southey, who was a regular contributor to the *Quarterly*, expostulated with Gifford upon the asperity of Croker's reviews of Miss Owenson's books.

She was a woman, however, not disposed to receive affronts with meekness, and as Thackeray and Disraeli afterward did, she gibbeted Mr. Croker in her novel "Florence McCarthy." In that very readable story he is Counsellor Con Crawley, the most detestable of all creatures, an Irish land agent. The likeness was readily recognized and universally applauded.

Her marriage was perhaps the most amusing event in her life. She was much liked by the Marquis and Marchioness of Abercorn and was a favorite guest with them. They took her to London and introduced her into fashionable society. She sat for her portrait to Sir Thomas

Lawrence and it was at this time that Lady Abercorn thought it was the proper thing for Glorvina to get married. She accordingly arranged a match for her with the family physician, Dr. Thomas Charles Morgan, a learned and estimable gentleman some four or five years Miss Owenson's junior. The doctor was in love with her and they were duly engaged, but Miss Owenson could not bring herself to name the day. Finally, when she was sitting one morning by the library fire, Lady Abercorn opened the door and said: "Glorvina, come up-stairs directly and be married; there must be no more trifling." Thereupon Glorvina was led up-stairs to the drawing-room, where she found bridegroom and chaplain awaiting her and was at once married past redemption. While the engagement was pending Dr. Morgan was knighted through the influence of the Abercorns and became Sir Thomas Charles Morgan, and thus Glorvina became Lady Morgan. Indeed, it has been stated she made the knighthood one of the conditions of the marriage.

Lady Morgan was given a pension of three hundred pounds by the Grey administration in 1830 and in 1837 removed permanently to London, where, in a pleasant residence near the fashionable district, she had a salon for the next twenty

years. Here were to be seen in her modest drawing-room the most brilliant men and women of the time—such as Rogers, Moore, Disraeli, Macaulay, Bulwer, Thackeray and Dickens. Her nieces added to the attractions of the place, being beautiful and accomplished young women.

Lady Morgan survived until 1859, when she died at the age of eighty-two. She possessed some womanly weaknesses, but she was a woman of genius having many admirable traits. She had a horror of debt and from her girlhood kept free from it and earned an honest living. Her novels and her books on France and Italy are now seldom read, but several of the novels are well worth reading.

TWO OLD NOVELS.

I LIKE to read occasionally certain of the old-fashioned novels that once delighted the hearts of our grandfathers and grandmothers. They have a twofold interest. One as showing the taste of the readers of that time, the other as exhibiting the literary art of the writers. And besides, many of them have considerable merit as stories —not a bad feature in novels.

There is "Frankenstein," for instance. Most people who know anything at all of the literature of the nineteenth century, know that novel by name at least. There have been so many allusions to it in one way or another, that one cannot help knowing that it is a weird and ghastly story that has something to do with a monster; but whether Frankenstein is the monster or not, some apparently well-read people do not know. As, for instance, Mrs. Deland, in her admirable novel, "Sidney," permits Major Lee to speak of "Christianity as a Frankenstein." If the Major meant anything, it was that it was a

Frankenstein's monster. So Chauncey Depew, in his fine oration on the centennial of Washington's inauguration, says that the fathers looked upon the "Union as a Frankenstein." Charles Sumner was more accurate when he compared the Southern Confederacy to "the soulless monster of Frankenstein, the wretched creation of mortal science without God."

The story was written by Mary Godwin, or Shelley, as she became, when she was living with the poet in Switzerland after their elopement. Lord Byron was their neighbor, and they spent much time together, reading, writing and conversing. Byron one day proposed that each should write a ghost story, and thereupon they all set to work. Both Byron and Shelley failed, but Mary persevered, and at last presented her story for the consideration of the poets. They greatly admired it, and it was sent to London for publication. It met with instantaneous and wide success. This was in 1817.

In these days of innumerable novels there are not many persons that pick up this story, but it is quite worth while to do so.

Frankenstein, the hero, relates the story. He is a Swiss youth, educated at the University of Ingolstadt, and is possessed with an enthusiasm

for the study of chemistry and natural philosophy. He seeks to penetrate the mysteries of creation and the phenomena of human life and death. After a long period of study he at last discovers the sources of life and becomes capable of imparting animation to lifeless matter. He then proposed to create a magnificent being, colossal in proportions and beautiful in every feature, and give it life. In a workshop far apart from human habitation he proceeded with his labors, collecting his materials from charnel-houses and dissecting rooms. At last his work was ended, and there lay before him the immense being he had molded in accordance with his ideal of perfection. He says: "It was on a dreary night in November that I beheld the accomplishment of my toils. With an anxiety that almost amounted to agony I collected the instruments of life around me that I might infuse a spark of being into the lifeless thing that lay at my feet. It was already one o'clock in the morning; the rain pattered dismally against the window-panes and my candle was nearly burnt out, when, by the glimmer of the half-extinguished light, I saw the dull yellow eye of the creature open; it breathed hard and a convulsive motion agitated its limbs." The immense creature arose, and the artist, terrified at

his work, flees away. The monster possessed life and every attribute of humanity but a soul. Nowhere could it find human sympathy. It is out of harmony with the Universe, and after roaming everywhere and finding no happiness it returns to its creator and demands that he shall make a companion with whom it can live and find sympathy and love. Frankenstein refuses and thenceforth the monster pursues him with hatred and revenge. It slays his brothers, sister, friend and bride. To escape, Frankenstein flees to the far North and sails out on the Arctic Sea, but even there the monster finds him and they both perish.

Such is but the merest outline of this famous story from which morals and illustrations have been drawn without end.

Almost contemporaneous with "Frankenstein," there appeared another novel called "Melmoth the Wanderer." It was written by Robert Charles Maturin and was first published about the year 1820.

Maturin was an Irishman and a clergyman in the Church of England. He wrote novels and plays, one of the latter, "Bertram," having been produced by Edmund Kean very successfully. The elder Booth used to play it in this country.

"Melmoth" was greatly praised by Scott and Byron and was widely read. The scene is laid in the seventeenth century. The hero is an Irish gentleman in financial difficulties. To escape from them he bargains his soul away to the devil in exchange for two hundred years of earthly life and power. Naturally it is a weird story and Thackeray tells how it used to frighten the boys at school. Melmoth soon tires of his power, and then commences his wanderings in search of some one to whom he can transfer his contract. He meets with persons suffering from all manner of human ills to whom he offers immediate relief, but the moment they understand the conditions they reject the offer. He watches and waits for years, but he can find no human soul willing to take his place and accept his fate. The wanderer's movements are surrounded by great mystery and he appears and disappears with great suddenness, but he can always be recognized by his glowing eyes that are visible even in the dark. Balzac was a great admirer of this novel and wrote a continuation of it entitled "Melmoth Reconciled to the Church," in which he tells how the hero was finally absolved from his curse.

This novel gave its author a wide celebrity and for a season he was one of the lions of London

society. The critics declared that posterity would rank "Melmoth" and "Bertram" with "Faust" and "Manfred," but the critics have not been justified by the event. The play and the novel are now quite forgotten. There are fine passages in the story and it is well worth reading.

THEODORE HOOK.

(1789–1841.)

GEORGE S. STREET, the well-known English critic and essayist, has been quoted as saying that Hook's humor was "merely mechanical and brainless, and could not outlive the generation it first amused."

Mr. Street's judgment is too sweeping. Hook's humor has outlived not only his own but several succeeding generations. I am free to admit that it is not a high class of humor.

It possessed nothing of the exquisite delicacy of Lamb's, the masculine heartiness of Sydney Smith's, or the elegance of Sheridan's. It bordered on buffoonery and hoaxing and practical joking formed a large part of it. Sheer impudence was often its origin, as when he once stepped up to a pompous gentleman walking in the Strand and inquired: "I beg your pardon, sir, but may I ask if you are anybody in particular?"

One almost envies the effrontery of it, for have

we not all seen just such characters at times to whom we would have liked to put a similar question?

Theodore Hook was a wit, practical joker, improvisatore, man about town, diner out, comedian of the parlor and the drawing-room, and raconteur, who flourished in London society during the first third of the last century. He wrote novels and edited the famous "John Bull" newspaper which earned an unenviable notoriety for its support of George IV. against Queen Caroline, and for its vulgar satire of the Whigs.

Both his novels and his newspaper are now forgotten, or are only remembered because of the historical interest they may possess.

For more than thirty years his life was a succession of boisterous buffooneries, in which he spared no one, until his name became synonymous all over London with hoaxing. If he could mystify or make fools of people, that was to him the height of humor, and he would convulse dinner parties or drawing-rooms by relating his drolleries of this kind. For Hook was a consummate actor and master of pantomime, and could present the scenes most vividly to his hearers. Or he would seat himself at the piano and tell the story in rhyme.

The story is quite familiar how he and Charles Mathews, rowing along the Thames one day, spied a signboard at the foot of a lawn on which they read, "Nobody permitted to land here. Trespassers prosecuted with the utmost rigor of the law." Such a prohibition simply stimulated them to land. Using their fishing lines as measuring tapes they solemnly stalked back and forth, taking the dimensions as surveyors. Hook with book and pencil in hand and Mathews as clerk. The irate owner and his lackeys rush down upon the intruders only to be coolly informed that they are the agents of the canal company which is to make a cut through these pleasure grounds. This so astounds the old gentleman that he finally invites the surveyors to dinner to talk the matter over. Nothing loath, they accept, and after a fine dinner and plenty of wine Hook seats himself at the piano and narrates the adventure in improvised verse, winding up with the announcement:

> And we greatly approve of your fare,
> Your cellar's as prime as your cook;
> This clerk here is Mathews, the player,
> And I'm Mr. Theodore Hook.

Another story is told of Hook and Coleridge, who, each in his particular way, were the lions at a party given by a gay young bachelor at his

villa. Much wine had been absorbed, when the Ancient Mariner declared he could drink no more wine, and if anything more was to be drunk it must be punch. The bowl was brought, and the punch duly brewed by the poet. Meanwhile Hook seated himself at the piano and burst into a bacchanal song, every line of which had reference to Coleridge. The room was hot, and when a glass of the new compound was handed to Hook he drank it off, and, exclaiming that he was stifled, flung his glass through the window. Coleridge rose with the aspect of a benign patriarch and demolished another pane, and the example was followed until the window became a sieve. The host in flinging his goblet struck the chandelier, and the roar of laughter was drowned in Hook's resumption of his song, in which he described the peculiar shot of each individual in his most exquisite style, rhyming their names with the feats they performed. In walking home Mr. Coleridge entertained his companions with a lecture on the distinction between talent and genius and declared that Hook was as true a genius as Dante. A judgment with which posterity does not agree.

Many other instances of this kind might be given that are within the fair limits of practical

jokes, but the so-called Berners Street hoax was of a very different stamp and was little less than criminal. This occurred in 1809, when Hook was in his twenty-first year.

He, with the help of two confederates, wrote one thousand letters to various tradesmen in London, ordering them to deliver certain goods on a day and hour named at a particular house in Berners Street. The house was occupied by a respectable widow. On various pretexts invitations were sent to the Lord Mayor, the Chief Justice, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Duke of York, and other people of distinction to call at the same place. The result was the street was blocked up, wagons were overturned, carriages were smashed, and an immense amount of property was lost or destroyed, while the good lady of the house was frightened almost to death. Such an enraged multitude of people had been seldom seen, and it would have gone hard with the perpetrator of the hoax could hands have been laid upon him. Safely ensconced in a lodging opposite, he and his confederates had laughed heartily all day at the scene, but they found it convenient to absent themselves from London for some time afterward. Hook did not reveal himself as the instigator of this brutal hoax until years afterward, when he

related it in his novel of "Gilbert Gurney." That novel is more or less his own autobiography with some fancy mingled with the facts.

Hook is satirized by Disraeli in "Coningsby" in the character of Lucian Gay, and by Thackeray in "Vanity Fair" and "Pendennis" as Mr. Wagg. They are not pleasant portraits.

He made large sums of money out of his newspaper, and later equally large sums from his novels, but money flowed from him like water. To the last he was a butterfly, and always a miserable butterfly at that. Gayety he had in abundance, but no happiness.

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK.

(1785–1866.)

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK was the last and one of the best of the convivial poets and masters of the English drinking song. The following has been called by critics of the highest order the perfection in that sort of writing :

If I drink water while this doth last,
  May I never again drink wine ;
For how can a man, in his life of a span,
  Do anything better than dine ?
We'll dine and drink, and say if we think
  That anything better can be ;
And when we have dined, wish all mankind
    May dine as well as we.

And though a good wish will fill no dish,
  And brim no cup with sack,
Yet thoughts will spring as the glasses ring
  To illumine our studious track.
O'er the brilliant dreams of our hopeful schemes ;
  The light of the flask shall shine,
And we'll sit till day, but we'll find the way
  To drench the world with wine.

Miss Agnes Repplier, in one of her most charming essays, says of this song, that it is "at once the kindest and the most scandalous that poet ever wrote—a song which is the final, definite, unrepentant expression of heterodoxy."

Another of Peacock's songs is "The Ghost,"

In life three ghostly friars were we,
And now three friendly ghosts we be.
Around our shadowy table placed,
The spectral bowl before us floats;
With wine that none but ghosts can taste
We wash our unsubstantial throats.
Three merry ghosts—three merry ghosts—three merry ghosts are we;
Let the ocean be port and we'll think it good sport
To be laid in that Red sea.

With songs that jovial specters chaunt
Our old refectory still we haunt,
The traveler hears our midnight mirth;
"Oh, list," he cries, "the haunted choir;
The merriest ghost that walks the earth
Is now the ghost of ghostly friar,"
Three merry ghosts—three merry ghosts—three merry ghosts are we;
Let the ocean be port and we'll think it good sport
To be laid in that Red sea.

It is probable that there are not many readers of Peacock's novels and poems in these days, but it is their loss. "Headlong Hall," "Night-

mare Abbey," "Melincourt," "Maid Marian," "Crotchet Castle," and "Gryll Grange" are more familiar by their names possibly than by their contents, and I am not certain they were ever very widely read. They are not for all tastes any more than are olives and caviare.

Thomas Love Peacock was born at Weymouth, in England, in 1785. He was almost entirely self-educated, having left school when he was thirteen. And yet he became exceptionally well-read in Greek, Latin, Italian, and French. His father died when he was three years old and he was brought up by his mother and maternal grandfather, Thomas Love, a retired naval officer, after whom he was named.

At the age of nineteen he went to London to write poetry and study in the British Museum. He seems to have never studied for a profession.

He was fond of solitary pedestrian tours and in one of his walks in Wales met the lady who subsequently became his wife, and on another occasion met the Shelleys—the poet and his first wife, Harriet. He and Shelley became warm and intimate friends, as Shelley's correspondence reveals. The character of Scythrop in Peacock's novel, "Nightmare Abbey," is drawn from Shelley. The novel was written in 1818 and

Shelley read it in Italy and wrote to Peacock as follows:

I am delighted with "Nightmare Abbey." I think Scythrop a character admirably conceived and executed; and I know not how to praise sufficiently the lightness, chastity, and strength of the language of the whole. It perhaps exceeds all your works in this. The catastrophe is excellent.

To those who have not read the story it may be said that Scythrop is a youth possessed with the desire to reform the world. He falls in love with two women at the same time, is drawn toward one and then toward the other, loses both and is always a dreamer.

In a letter to Mrs. Gisborne, Shelley says of Peacock:

His fine wit
Makes such a wound, the knife is lost in it;
A strain too learned for a shallow age,
Too wise for selfish bigots; let his page,
Which charms the chosen spirits of his time,
Fold itself up for a serener clime
Of years to come, and find its recompense
In that just expectation.

Peacock's satire was, as a rule, not harsh. He hated stupidity, he hated vulgarity, and he hated a fool and bore, and he had no hesitation in saying so.

His novels can hardly be called novels, but rather a series of fantastic and sarcastic conversations, with the slightest possible thread of a story running through them. He brings together a number of people who have knowledge, wit, learning, high spirits, love of music, pictures, books, and fond of good eating and drinking. Among them are enthusiasts and cranks on all sorts of subjects, religious, political, and social, and brilliant conversation abounds, containing a good deal of wisdom and not a little satire on the follies and foibles of well-known public characters, such as Shelley, Bryon, Coleridge, Sydney Smith, Lord Brougham, Lord John Russell, Canning, Wordsworth and Southey.

In the novel just referred to, "Nightmare Abbey," we have, in addition to Scythrop, Mr. Cypress, who is Lord Byron, and Mr. Skioner, who is drawn from Coleridge. Mr. Cypress writes a poem which is a hit at Byron's style:

There is a fever of the spirit,
The brand of Cain's unresting doom,
Which in the lone dark souls that bear it
Glows like a lamp in Tullia's tomb;
Unlike that lamp, its subtile fire
Burns, blasts, consumes its cell, the heart,
Till one by one hope, joy, desire,
Like dreams of shadowy smoke depart.

When hope, love, life itself, are only
Dust—spectral memories—dead and cold,
The unfed fire burns bright and lonely,
Like that undying lamp of old ;
And by that drear illumination,
Till time its clay-built home has rent,
Thought broods on feeling's desolation—
The soul is its own monument.

"Maid Marian" is the best known and most popular of Peacock's stories, for it is in a somewhat different vein from the others though it contains much delightful satire. The scene is laid in Sherwood Forest, in the time of Robin Hood, and its basis is the old delightful story that everybody reads and loves of Robin and his merry men.

"Crotchet Castle," the finest and best of all the novels, was written in 1831. The scene is a country house—a sort of "Liberty hall," where guests are assembled, each possessed with some particular crotchet. Rev. Dr. Folliott is the principal character and interlocutor, a stout Tory, full of good humor, a lover of paradox, a despiser of cant and shams, an incisive conversationalist, and a sort of cross between Dr. Johnson and Sydney Smith. I have always thought that Walter Savage Landor stood for this portrait.

The doctor takes particular delight in exposing

the fallacies of Mr. McQuedy (Lord Brougham), who is a great political economist, doctrinaire, and advocate of the diffusion of knowledge.

The women, Lady Clarinda and Susannah Touchang, are delightful, and the volume is as breezy and as full of wit, humor, and satire as can be. The drinking song first above quoted is in this novel.

In 1819 it was Peacock's good fortune to obtain a clerkship with the East Indian Company, in whose employ it will be remembered Charles Lamb also was. He retained this place, with occasional promotions, for thirty-four years, when he was retired on a pension as Lamb had been before him. He married shortly after his appointment, his labors were light, and he led a life of lettered ease until his death in 1866.

His charming story of "Gryll Grange" was written when he was seventy-five, and he was a contributor to *Fraser's Magazine* almost up to the time of his death.

GEORGE BORROW.

SCHOLAR, GIPSY, PRIEST.

(1803–1881)

A ONCE very famous novel, though it has long been forgotten by the reading public, except perhaps by name, is "Lavengro; The Scholar, the Gipsy, the Priest." It first appeared in 1851, and then for a long time was out of print.

It has always been cherished, however, by a chosen few, lovers of good literature and good fighting, who like Thackeray took their fiction "strong with, and no mistake."

The book is full of epigrams, curious learning, wisdom, and humor, and has the indescribable flavor of genius.

The scene is laid in England between the period 1820 and 1830, the days of stage-coaching and of prize-fights, when everybody had time for everything, and when a halo of romance still shone around a gipsy camp.

The story is a succession of pictures of English

rural and city life, and relates the adventures of a youth who leads a respectable life on the coasts of scampdom, dependent entirely on himself for a livelihood. It is an autobiography based in fact on Borrow's own adventures, with enough fiction to conceal the identity of the characters. The hero has received a fair education and his literary ambitions, with an inherited instinct for vagrancy. In these days he would be a hobo. He took up with the gipsies and was initiated a blood brother in the tribe, learned their language, and became a past master of cant.

But, being an honest youth, he could neither beg nor poach nor steal. He went to London with some literary ventures in his pocket, though at first he met with little success. His London adventures are wonderfully interesting, and he makes some queer friendships.

One is an old applewoman on London bridge, whose patron saint was Moll Flanders, who, supposing Lavengro to be a pickpocket, gives him aid and counsel.

While in London he saw the funeral of Lord Byron, and no pen has described it more graphically. Standing one morning at the foot of Oxford Street occupied with rather mournful thoughts at his bad prospects, he is aware of a certain commo-

tion among the people around him. The shops are closing and crowds are gathering. Then he hears voices cry, "There it comes!" and looking he saw a hearse and behind it three or four mourning coaches, and "behind these a long train of splendid carriages, all of which, without one exception, were empty."

"Whose body is in that hearse?" said I to a dapper-looking individual, seemingly a shopkeeper, who stood beside me on the pavement looking at the procession. "The mortal relics of Lord Byron," said the dapper-looking individual, mouthing his words and smirking—"the illustrious poet, which have just been brought back from Greece and are being conveyed to the family vault." "An illustrious poet, was he?" said I.

"Beyond all criticism," said the dapper man. "All we of the rising generation are under incalculable obligations to Byron; I myself, in particular, have reason to say so; in all my correspondence my style is formed on the Byronic model." I looked at the individual for a moment, who smiled and smirked to himself, and then I turned my eyes upon the hearse proceeding slowly up the almost endless street. I thought of Milton, abandoned to poverty and blindness; of witty and ingenious Butler, consigned to the tender mercies of bailiffs, and starving Otway; they had lived neglected and despised, and when they died a few poor mourners only had followed them to the grave. "Great poet, sir," said the dapper-looking man, "great poet, but unhappy." Unhappy? Yes, I had heard that he had been unhappy. I turned away. "Great poet, sir," said the dapper man, turning away, too, "but unhappy—fate of genius, sir. I, too, have been unhappy."

Lavengro turned sadly away, but being reduced to eighteen pence for his subsistence he stirrred himself more actively with the publishers and succeeding in selling a story for the sum of twenty pounds and once more sought the country and a gipsy life.

The real story of Borrow's life, however, is even more interesting than the novel, and few men have had careers more adventurous.

George Borrow was born in Norfolk, England, July 17, 1803, and was the son of a captain in the British military service. Born of a restless and combative race, even as a boy he was always in scrapes of one kind or another and in those days of the heroical application of birch had much knowledge and some deportment beaten into him. One of his instructors from whom he learned much was the celebrated William Taylor of Norwich, who taught him German and Danish, and whom Borrow has sketched in "Lavengro," with his philosophy, skepticism, and inveterate tobacco smoking.

One of his fellow-pupils was John Thurtell, also a native of Norfolk, who was hanged for the murder of William Weare, and another at the other extreme of life, was James Martineau, the celebrated Unitarian divine.

Borrow was the English Mezzofanti and had a wonderful facility in the acquisition of languages. He was not a philologist and knew no language critically but his own, but he could converse and write in thirty.

With a hereditary tendency to vagabondage, he associated when still a boy with the English gipsies, and was really initiated a blood brother in the tribe, as related in "Lavengro." In Borrow's biography, by Dr. Knapp, this is confirmed, but no light is thrown on the passage concerning Isobel Ferners, the stalwart girl who seconded him in his fight with the "Flaming Tinman." The fight was veritable enough, but one would like to know something more about the girl, but the biographer throws no light on the passage, nor even mentions the girl.

After the "Lavengro" episode in his life Borrow entered the employ of the British Bible society. That body wanted a man who had skill in languages to take up the Manchu-Tartar language and go to Russia to bring out a translation of the New Testament. Borrow offered himself, was accepted, and went to Russia. Inside of two years he learned the Manchu language and printed the four Gospels in it. The performance gave him a European reputation, and competent critics have

spoken of it highly. He was next sent to Spain, and his labors there are described in his two books. "The Bible in Spain" and "The Gipsies in Spain," books that may always be read with pleasure. "Romany Rye" is a sequel to "Lavengro"—by no means its equal—which purports to give the conclusion to Borrow's life among the gipsies. It is not entirely satisfactory as an autobiography, but it is an undoubted portrayal of gipsy life and in Borrow's best style of writing. It is well worth reading.

Borrow had many friends in the literary circles in London, though in his long life he does not seem to have met with the more celebrated set, such as Dickens, Thackeray, Carlyle, and Tennyson. But with Edward FitzGerald, the translator of Omar Khayyam, he was on terms of great intimacy, and their correspondence is given in Dr. Knapp's volumes.

Almost everything Borrow wrote, "The Bible in Spain," "The Gipsies in Spain," "The Romany Rye," and "Wild Wales," is autobiographical, and he has been called the English Le Sage and the English Cervantes. He called himself a "Le Sage in water colors," and there is no doubt of the resemblances between Lavengro and Gil Blas. Nevertheless he appeals to us most as a

strong original character, fond of horses, outdoor life, boxing, and strong ale, with a general hatred of all kinds of pretense and cant. He was the first of the class whom Charles Kingsley afterward called "muscular Christians," and he gave many a sledge-hammer blow in defense of his faith.

Theodore Watts, who knew him intimately and greatly loved him, has given us a splendid portraiture of the man in the London *Athenæum;* Sept. 3, 10, 1881. He speaks of his mighty figure, frank and childlike gaze, his fine East Anglican accent, his love of nature, his passion for adventure, his reverence and unquestioning belief in God's beneficence, his fresh, racy, and often whimsical conversation, and of his tales of the wondrous things he had seen in his strange and eventful career.

"No man's writings," says Mr. Watts, "can take you into the country as Borrow's can; it makes you feel the sunshine, see the meadows, smell the flowers, hear the skylark sing, and the grasshopper chirp. Who else can do it? I know of none."

In 1840 Borrow married a widow with some estate and settled down for a time at Oulton, in Norfolk, where he was as happy as his restless nature would permit. He traveled later in south-

eastern Europe and made a tour of Wales, and then resided for a time in London. His last days were passed at Oulton, where he died in 1881 in his seventy-ninth year.

Every reader fond of nature and of robust truth will take unbounded pleasure in Borrow's writings.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

(1786–1855.)

One of the books that is always pleasing to pick up at odd times to prattle to you enjoyably for half an hour or so is Miss Mitford's "Recollections of a Literary Life." It is not an autobiography particularly, though she gives, glimpses of herself and her surroundings and of some of her writings, but the staple of the volume is about the books she read and the authors she most delighted in. It is charmingly written—Professor Saintsbury ranks her second only to Charles Lamb as a writer of light and graceful English—and she exhibits the most catholic tastes in her love of books. It is pleasant to find an English writer in the early fifties of the last century praising Hawthorne, Longfellow, Whittier, and Holmes, as well as Wordsworth, Southey and Savage Landor. She has a chapter on Oliver Wendell Holmes, written long before "The Autocrat" appeared, praising him highly.

Miss Mitford was always a favorite with American readers, and the simple cottage at Swallowfield was one of the literary Meccas of American tourists. George Ticknor visited her in 1835, and gives this description of her in his journal :

He found Miss Mitford living literally in a cottage, neither ornée nor poetical—except inasmuch as it had a small garden crowded with the richest and most beautiful profusion of flowers—where she lives with her father, a fresh, stout old man who is in his seventy-fifth year. She herself seemed about fifty, short and fat, with very gray hair, perfectly visible under her cap and nicely arranged in front. She has the simplest and kindest manners, and entertained us for two hours with the most animated conversation and a great variety of anecdote, without any of the pretensions of an author by profession and without any of the stiffness that generally belongs to single ladies of her age and reputation.

By the testimony of all who ever met her she was one of the most lovable of women.

Miss Mitford wrote poems, plays, novels, essays, and sketches, many of them possessing high literary value. Her plays were produced on the stage with success by such distinguished actors and actresses as Frederick Young, Charles Kemble, Macready, Helen Faucit, and Miss Foote. Her greatest and best-remembered play is "Rienzi," founded upon a passage in Gibbon's history descriptive of the warring factions of Rome

in the fourteenth century. Extracts from it were favorites with American schoolboys fifty years ago, particularly Rienzi's address to the Romans, beginning:

> I come not here to talk. Ye know too well
> The story of our thraldom.

One of the finest passages is the following:

> For Liberty! go seek
> The mountain tops, where with the crashing pines
> The north wind revels! Go where the ocean pours
> O'er horrid rocks, or sports in eddying pools,
> Go where the eagle and the seasnake dwell,
> Midst mighty elements where nature is,
> And man is not, and ye may see afar
> Impalpable as a rainbow on the clouds,
> The glorious vision Liberty.

This is poetry of a high order.

Besides her poems and plays she wrote a gossiping and chatty series of essays entitled "Our Village," which appeared in the *London Magazine*, the periodical that had the honor of first publishing the essays of Elia.

Miss Mitford's essays have a lightness of touch, a spontaneous humor, and occasional bits of pathos that make them very charming and insures her a place in English literature. Mrs. Browning, who long before her marriage was a

correspondent of Miss Mitford, says of "Our Village": "If read by snatches it comes on the mind as the summer air and the sweet hum of rural sounds floating upon the senses through an open window in the country, leaving with you for the whole day a tradition of fragrance and dew."

Mary Russell Mitford was born in Hampshire, England, December 16, 1786, the daughter of Dr. George Mitford, a gambler and spendthrift, who, after squandering his wife's fortune, also spent his daughter's and then lived on her earnings for the remainder of his long and useless life.

The sensational passage in Miss Mitford's life relates to her fortune. When ten years of age her father took her into a lottery office—lotteries at that time being under the government control as a means of raising revenue—and with the gambler's superstition asked the child to choose a number. With much persistence she asked for a certain number and would have no other. After much searching it was found and given to the little girl. When the drawing came off that number drew the twenty thousand pounds prize. That seems to be all the good it ever did her. By the time she was grown up the fortune was gone, and thenceforth she was compelled to earn her living by her pen.

In his "Reminiscences" the late James Payn says of her:

> Nothing ever destroyed her faith in those she loved. She spoke of her father as if there had never been such a father (and this, in a sense, was true, for he had spent his wife's fortune and the lottery fortune as well), and when he died she deemed it an irreparable loss. To my mind he seemed like a Mr. Turveydrop, but he really had been a most accomplished and agreeable person, though with nothing sublime about him except his selfishness.

From 1820 until 1855 Miss Mitford lived in the quiet English village she has made famous, a cheerful and sunny life, full of good works and good words. We do not hear that she ever had any love affairs or was inclined to marry. Her conversation was delightful and quite equaled the best of her writings. She was ever helpful to young authors, and died in 1855 beloved by all who knew her.

THE EDINBURGH REVIEW.

THE July number in 1902 of the *Edinburgh Review* rounded out and completed the first century of that famous periodical. It was a notable event, for no *Review* in the world has had a more eventful history, or has exercised so wide an influence on men and manners, on politics and literature, as the *Edinburgh Review*.

Modern English literary criticism began with it. There had been great English critics before that time, like Dryden and Johnson, and there had been magazines and reviews in which books were praised or lampooned, as the publisher felt inclined, though not at all in accordance with the merits or demerits of the book, but nothing like independent or impartial criticism in the current periodicals had yet been known.

The story of the founding of the *Review* has often been told. In the spring of 1802 a group of young men happened to be together in one of the upper flats of a house in Edinburgh.

They were Sydney Smith, Francis Horner, Henry Brougham, and Francis Jeffrey. They were well educated, poor, ambitious, and had their own way to make in life.

Smith had taken holy orders, had been a tutor, and was looking for a curacy. Jeffrey was a struggling advocate at the Scotch bar, Brougham had just been called to the English bar, and Horner was looking forward to a seat in parliament and the life of a statesman. They were all liberal and progressive in their political opinions, and it is doubtful if there were at that time any other four young men in the kingdom of Britain of greater promise or who achieved greater distinction in after life. Smith became one of the dignitaries of the Church, Brougham rose to be Lord High Chancellor of England, Jeffrey was raised to the Scottish bench, and Horner had a most distinguished career in parliament, though he died prematurely in the very prime of his life.

Sydney Smith suggested the *Review*, and although they could not raise one hundred pounds among them, the suggestion was hailed with acclaim. Smith was appointed editor and commissioned to find a publisher.

The young reviewers set to work and in October, 1802, the first number of the "Blue

and Yellow " appeared. It was the literary sensation of the time.

It is difficult for us to appreciate the stir it made, we who are accustomed to the rise and fall of magazines and reviews, " when every day and year brings forth a new one," but our grandfathers or great-grandfathers thought it a most memorable event and looked upon the new wonder with feelings largely governed by their political bias. If they were Whigs they were exultant, if they were Tories they saw in it nothing but evil, and that continually. It was, or in time it became, the great organ of liberal opinion, and during its career was instrumental in bringing great and beneficent reforms in English law. In politics and literature it became an immense power, far exceeding even the most extravagant dreams of the youths who founded it.

We now glance over those faded volumes and wonder at the sensation they made. Their fire has long been extinguished, their wit, their vigor, and keenness completely evaporated. We do not care to read them, or if there are among them an occasional article of literary excellence we prefer to read it in the collected works of the author.

With the second number, issued in January,

1803, Jeffrey became the editor, Smith having left Edinburgh to accept an English curacy.

Few men have held sway as a critic so long and so powerfully. To him, more than to any one person, is the success of the *Review* to be attributed. And when it is remembered that during all this period he was in the successful practice of an arduous profession, a leading advocate at the Scottish bar, that he wrote on almost every conceivable subject, that he was obliged to keep constant watch over his contributors, urging them to promptness, and touching up and sometimes rewriting their articles when received, we cannot but be amazed at his versatility and industry. It was no grudging compliment that Macaulay paid him when he wrote: "When I compare him with Sydney and myself I feel, with humility perfectly sincere, that his range is immeasurably wider than ours. And this only as a writer. But he is not only a writer; he has been a great advocate, and he is a great judge. Take him all in all, I think him more nearly a universal genius than any man of our time." This is, indeed, "praise from Sir Hubert Stanley," and is praise, indeed.

Sir Walter Scott was among the early contributors, but Jeffrey's liberal politics and notions of reform estranged the great novelist and caused

him to assist in setting up the *Quarterly* as a Tory organ.

Nevertheless the *Edinburgh* was the foremost periodical in Europe for a quarter of a century under Jeffrey's management, and the impulse and direction he gave it remains with it to this day.

In his criticism Jeffrey tried to be impartial and he never reviewed a book either from the "friendly" or the "business office" standpoint. He was a just judge, but often a severe one, though he never had the savage moods that characterized Gifford and Croker in the *Quarterly*. It was a criticism in the *Edinburgh* written by Brougham on "Hours of Idleness," that aroused the wrath of Byron and awakened his genius. "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" proved that Byron could give as well as receive blows.

> Health to immortal Jeffrey! once, in name,
> England could boast a judge almost the same;
> In soul so like, so merciful, yet just,
> Some think that Satan has resigned his trust,
> And given the spirit to the world again,
> To sentence letters as he sentenced men.
> With hand less mighty, but with heart as black,
> With voice as willing to decree the rack.

Byron's later poems met with Jeffrey's praise,

and an appreciative notice of Keats did much to remove the sting of the *Quarterly's* unjust attack on "Endymion." But Wordsworth, Southey, and even Scott felt the critic's lash, and the famous phrase, "This will never do," directed against "The Excursion," has survived to the present day. And, in truth, it takes a very ardent Wordsworthian to wade through that voluminous poem at the present day.

Many and famous have been the contributors to the *Review*, including the most eminent men in politics and literature Great Britain has produced. Macaulay won his first fame in its pages, and for nearly twenty years was its chief support. Carlyle was a contributor for a time, but he did not like the way Jeffrey sometimes slashed his articles and toned down his style, and took his wares elsewhere. Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt, Abraham Hayward, and Thackeray were also acceptable contributors.

Since the advent of the monthly reviews the *Edinburgh* may not have been so popular or so powerful as it once was, but it is to-day a very great organ of criticism and it commands attention throughout the English-speaking world.

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FRANCIS JEFFREY,

GREAT EDITOR AND CRITIC.

(1773–1850).

Francis Jeffrey's editorship of the *Edinburgh Review* from 1802 until 1829 was most notable and few men have held critical sway so long and so powerfully. During that period he wrote on general literature, biography, history, poetry, philosophy, jurisprudence, fiction, and politics. It was the period that saw the rise of the great romantic movement in English literature, led by Coleridge, Wordsworth, Southey, Byron, Shelley, Keats, and Scott, and Jeffrey bore his part in it as critic and commentator. He was in sympathy with the movement as a revolt from the so-called "correctness" of the eighteenth century literature, but he did not entirely approve of the methods and style of all the great writers we have mentioned. Some of them he praised while others felt the sharp sting of his criticism.

A volume of his essays, selected by himself, has been published, and it is well worthy of any reader's time and thought. The style is not picturesque and full, like Macaulay's, nor quaint and charming like Charles Lamb's, nor so varied as Hazlitt's, but it is luminous and pleasing and often felicitous.

Jeffrey always goes directly to the point, and holds it firmly. He never divagates, nor goes out of his way to add a grace to his manner. He is usually downright and always dogmatic. His limitations are apparent, but within them he is an acute and often admirable critic.

In many respects he was a model editor, and could turn his hand to anything—a volume on Scotch metaphysics, French memoirs, English poetry or German fiction, and he possessed the audacity that made him afraid of no subject, and the egotism that convinced him he could adequately write upon it. He had a happy knack of touching up the articles sent in to him, often on timely or excellent subjects, but not always well or carefully written. A graceful sentence here and there or an apt quotation was all that was necessary to make them effective. Sometimes, however, he went far beyond the rights of an editor in this respect, and would change an

article to such an extent that its own father would not know it. This "editorial hacking to right and to left" drew a growling protest from Carlyle on more than one occasion. Sydney Smith often laughed at these traits—though Jeffrey never "doctored" his articles—and used to say that all Jeffrey lacked was modesty to make him the most charming of men. But his industry and versatility were amazing.

As a critic Jeffrey meant to be impartial and just, but his range was too narrow and certain of his literary judgments upon his contemporaries have not been confirmed by time. "This will never do," is the famous sentence with which he began his critique on "The Excursion."

Undoubtedly it is a tedious poem and few readers have the courage to pursue that journey to the end, but the same may be said in these days of "Paradise Lost."

Wordsworth's poem, in spite of its dulness in places, "has done."

So too Jeffrey's remark on "The White Doe of Rylstone" that it was "the very worst poem ever imprinted in a quarto volume" is exaggerated dispraise, though it is the undoubted fact that "The White Doe" is a very dull poem in many respects. But Jeffrey also lacked in appre-

ciation of Wordsworth's shorter poems, such as the ode on "Immortality," the "Lines on Tintern Abbey," and the sonnets.

On the other hand he most unduly praised and overestimated Southey—whom he placed far above Wordsworth. The tiresome epics of Kehama" and "Roderick" were received by the *Review* with acclaim, but modern readers care nothing for them, and they are now seldom, if ever, read.

Jeffrey also gave Rogers and Campbell a higher place than Shelley, Keats, and Byron, but a later generation does not confirm this judgment.

But when we turn to the mass of his criticism it is sane and abiding. There is nothing better in English criticism than his essays on Swift, on Hazlitt's "Characters of Shakespeare," on Campbell's "Specimens of the British Poets," and on "Byron." The essay on Swift is particularly fine and marked by a justice which had not then been accorded to the great Dean in a world still under the influence of Dr. Johnson.

Jeffrey also recognized the genius of Keats and set the stamp of his critical approval on those immortal poems that were so savagely assailed and vilified in the pages of the *Quarterly* and of *Blackwood's Magazine*.

Jeffrey's biography, by Lord Cockburn, gives

a very excellent portraiture and we get glimpses of him in many of the diaries, journals, and biographies of his contemporaries. Every testimony shows him to have been a man of warm heart, genial manners, and charitable disposition.

His hand was ever ready to help those who needed it and he often did this in secret and without solicitation. He offered an annuity to Carlyle when the latter was making his London plunge, though it was refused. A loan of fifty pounds was, however, accepted. Jeffrey was one of the few men Carlyle praised. When Hazlitt was oppressed by sickness and poverty Jeffrey sent him one hundred pounds and offered him another one hundred pounds if it were needed.

He retained his youthful feelings into old age and the anecdote has been often told of how, when "The Old Curiosity Shop" was coming out and all England was crying over the sad fate of Little Nell, Jeffrey was one of the thousands of readers who wrote to Dickens praying him to spare the life of the heroine.

He lived a long, happy, and successful life, was raised to the Scottish bench, on which he sat until his death in 1850 in his seventy-seventh year.

Few public careers have been more enviable.

SYDNEY SMITH,

HUMORIST AND REVIEWER.

(1771–1845.)

The honor of being the first to propose the founding of the *Edinburgh Review* is usually accorded to Sydney Smith, and, as already stated, he was the editor of the first number.

Receiving the appointment of a curacy in Yorkshire, he was obliged to leave Edinburgh, and the editorship of the *Review* passed to Jeffrey, but for many years he was a constant contributor and its main support next to Jeffrey.

His contributions, like those of Jeffrey and Macaulay, have been published in a single volume, and, while they do not possess the literary art and fulness of Macaulay, they are extremely readable and interesting.

They have another value, too, as showing the advance in human progress in the last one hundred years. He has the merit of having been on

the side of justice and right. He loved liberty and toleration and fought long and ably for Catholic emancipation and reform. He espoused no cause that was not finally successful. We can hardly realize the condition of English law and English society when he was young. The laws were brutal and savage. If a man injured Westminster bridge he was hanged; if he appeared disguised on a public road, if he cut down young trees, if he shot at rabbits, if he stole anything from a wheat field, if he stole any property worth forty shillings—for these offenses he was hanged. No Catholic could hold office, and Ireland was kept in subjection by the bayonet. Smith warred against these abuses and lived to see his cause triumphant.

There was a time when American people did not like him very well because he gave us some very hard, and, for the most part, well-deserved criticism. In 1818 he inquired in the *Review:* "In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book or goes to an American play?"

A few years later Washington Irving and Fenimore Cooper made the gibe stingless.

He never forgave Pennsylvania for repudiating a certain portion of its State debt by which he lost a considerable sum of money. Nevertheless,

he appreciated the wonderful growth and energy of the American people, and he closes one of his essays on America with the sentence: "We look with unqualified pleasure to such a land of freedom, and such a spectacle of human happiness."

He was born at Woodford, in the east of England, June 3, 1771. His father, one of the most eccentric of men, married a beautiful woman, left her at the church door, and went rambling over the earth in search of adventure, in order to tame himself, probably, for domestic life. After five or six years he returned and became the father of four sons, all of whom made some mark in the world. The eldest was Robert—generally called "Bobus," a family nickname—who had the reputation of being the most brilliant and able man of his time, though, strangely enough, no speech—he was a lawyer and member of parliament—nor work of any sort can now be produced, has in fact never been produced, to justify his fame. Sydney was the second son and was educated at Winchester, one of England's famous schools, and at Oxford. He wished to become a lawyer, but as Bobus had chosen the law old Mr. Smith thought one lawyer sufficient for the family, and very curtly told him he might become a college tutor or a parson. He chose the Church, not

without some misgivings, but he addressed himself dutifully to its noble and self-denying work, and Mr. Reid in the latest biography shows how faithful he was, though the world had not always given him full credit in this respect. His life can hardly be called eventful. He first became a curate on Salisbury Plain, then a tutor to the eldest son of the parish squire, with whom he started for Germany. But the wars came on and in "stress of politics," as he says, they put into Edinburgh, where they resided for five years from 1798 to 1803. Then he obtained other livings, married, and resided for a time in London, then at the rectories of Foston and Combe-Florey. Afterward he was appointed a canon of St. Paul's Cathedral. He died in 1845, in his seventy-fourth year.

His fame rests upon his essays, his letters, and his conversation. The latter is preserved in the memoirs and letters of the time—in the pages of Greville, in the diary of Tom Moore, in the Table Talk of Rogers, and in his biographies. He was one of the most noted of conversationalists, and his brilliant wit made him a welcome guest at many tables even when he was only a poor clergyman. Nor was he a time-server or a hanger-on of any kind, but was always independent and

understood precisely what was his due. He was a *bon vivant* and enjoyed the pleasures of the table. Of Macaulay, who generally out-talked him, he once said: "Oh, yes, we both talk a great deal, but I don't believe Macaulay ever did hear my voice. Sometimes, when I have told a good story, I have thought to myself: Poor Macaulay, he will be very sorry some day to have missed hearing that." At another time he said: "I wish that Macaulay would see the difference between colloquy and soliloquy."

"It is a great proof of shyness," he once said to a young lady, "to crumble your bread at dinner. I see you are afraid of me; you crumble your bread. I do it when I sit by the bishop of London, and with both hands when I sit by the archbishop."

Hallam was a very disputatious talker, and contradicted everybody. At one of Rogers' breakfasts at which Hallam was present Jeffrey arrived late. "Ah," exclaimed Smith, greeting, "we know you have been detained trying the case of Hallam versus Everybody." At another time, speaking of a dinner and how every one was engaged, he said: "And there was Hallam with his mouth full of cabbage and contradiction." Once he said that Hallam would contradict a

watchman as he called the hour. But although he often laughed at his friends and greatly satirized them, he never said anything to cause pain. Lord Dudley once said to him: "You have been laughing at me, Sydney, for the last seven years, and yet you have never said anything I could wish were unsaid." It is not every wit that can thus be complimented.

As a letter writer he was as pleasing as he was as a conversationalist. His correspondence sparkles with wit—natural and unforced. In reply to an invitation to dinner which he was unable to accept, instead of the hackneyed "regrets" or "previous engagement," he writes: "Dear Lady Davy: Our tastes (pardon my vanity) are so similar that I like to meet all whom you like to invite. My inclinations must remain ungratified on the 4th, as I am engaged to dine with Lord Tankerville.

> Body and mind will thus divided be,
> I dine with Tankerville and think of thee."

At another time he writes: "Lord Tankerville has sent me a whole buck. This necessarily takes up a good deal of my time." Again he says: "The information of very plain women is so inconsiderable that I agree with you in set-

ting no store by it." But columns might be filled with good things from his abundant store.

He was a fast friend, an affectionate husband and father, a faithful pastor, a good man. He was equal to every vicissitude of fortune and every emergency in life, and he never consciously misused his power of satire and humor. It was something in his day to preach liberal ideas and hatred of oppression, but he did it without fear or faltering. His writings are worthy of study, and he is worthy of remembrance and honor.

WILLIAM GIFFORD

AND THE "QUARTERLY."

To mention the *Edinburgh Review* is also to remember its great rival, the *Quarterly*, that still exists and flourishes in all its original vigor.

Sir Walter Scott was the first to suggest the *Review*. He had at first supported and contributed to the *Edinburgh*, but when, under the influence of Jeffrey, Smith, and Brougham, that periodical became radical in its politics and an ardent advocate of the Whig party, the Tories of Edinburgh became greatly angered, kicked the *Review* out of doors, and looked about for some means of starting an opposition. Scott opened a correspondence with some of his London friends, got John Murray to be the publisher, and in 1809 the *Quarterly* made its first appearance under the editorship of William Gifford. The principal contributors in the beginning were Scott, John Wilson Croker, Canning, then at the beginning of his career as a statesman, and Southey. The

latter was for many years one of the mainstays of the *Review*, as, indeed, it was to him. It was in the pages of the *Quarterly* that Southey's life of Lord Nelson first appeared.

But the man who gave the *Review* its peculiar tone and character was the editor, William Gifford, a name now tolerably well forgotten, but which was once the synonym for savage and unsparing criticism.

William Gifford was born in Devonshire in 1757 and was of extremely humble birth. Left an orphan in childhood he commenced life first as a cabin-boy on a sailing vessel, and then he became a shoemaker. A bright and clever boy, he soon attracted the attention of the village surgeon, who interested himself in him sufficiently to provide means for his education. He was finally sent to Oxford, and after taking his degree went to London to engage in literary pursuits.

There was at this time a fantastic set of poetasters and scribblers for the papers and magazines called "The Della Cruscans," who posed as the great poets and writers of the day, and were most extravagantly praised by their friends and admirers. It was a sort of mutual admiration society, and their jingling rhymes passed muster because there was nothing else written. Under the pseudonyms

of Della Crusca, Anna Matilda, Benedict, Cesario, The Bard, etc., these poems appeared first in the poet's corner of the newspapers and were then collected and published in a volume styled "The British Album." This was in the year 1790.

The writers were all very respectable people, among them being Robert Merry, Hannah Crowley and Mrs. Piozzi, but they wrote the most driveling rubbish that was ever seen in print.

Gifford undertook to satirize this crew and published two poems, "The Baviad" and "The Maeviad," after the style of Pope's "Dunciad," and as Scott says in his journal, "squaboshed at one blow the coxcombs who had humbugged the world long enough."

This performance gave Gifford a considerable reputation as a satirist and he next became associated with George Canning and J. Hookham Frere in the publication of the *Anti-Jacobin*, a Tory newspaper of great power and brilliancy.

At the time Gifford became the editor of the *Quarterly* he was in his fifty-second year. Scott describes him as "a little man, dumpled up together and so ill-made as to seem almost deformed, but with a singular expression of talent in his countenance."

His enemies, and he had hosts of them, when

they tired of calling him a cobbler, called him Æsop. Such were the amenities of politics and of criticism in the early days of the nineteenth century. For fifteen years Gifford conducted the *Quarterly* with a zeal and an unscrupulousness that made him the most feared and hated man of his time. He had great controversial talent, a keen eye for blunders, a thorough knowledge of English, and a command of invective rarely equaled. He shot poisoned arrows, and the wounds made never healed. We have no record that any of the enemies he made was ever reconciled to him or forgave him.

The object of the *Review* being to antagonize the Whigs in every possible way and to support the Tory party unflinchingly, books written by men known to be liberal in their political views were unmercifully castigated, while the Tory writers were praised to the skies. Almost every writer whose works are now classic, and part of the treasures of English literature, writers like Shelley, Keats, Lamb, Hazlit, Leigh Hunt, and Wordsworth, were scathingly denounced and ridiculed in the *Review*. Byron and Gifford were on good terms, though Byron was a radical. His poems were lauded, but the fact that Murray was his publisher might have had something to do with that.

Gifford wrote the review of Keats' "Endymion," which was so savagely unjust and which, it used to be said, shortened the life of the poet.

The criticism angered and hurt Keats, but it did not kill him. A more fell disease than criticism was in his constitution and he died of consumption.

Gifford undoubtedly took unbounded pleasure in giving pain to those he hated. Southey said of him: "He had a heart full of kindness for all living creatures except authors; them he regarded as a fishmonger regards eels, or as Izaak Walton did slugs, worms, and frogs."

Tom Moore confirms this testimony: "The mildest man in the world until he takes a pen in his hand, but then all gall and spitefulness."

As editor, Gifford, like Jeffrey, took great liberties with the articles of his contributors, pruning, paring, and changing them to suit his own views and temper, to such an extent sometimes that their own authors would not acknowledge them.

He once invited Charles Lamb to review Wordsworth's "Excursion," and much as Lamb disliked Gifford and hated the *Review* he consented, because he was an ardent admirer of Wordsworth. But when the article appeared it was so hacked

and hewed that Lamb fairly cried over it and begged Wordsworth not to read it.

Gifford's editorship extended from 1809 to 1824, and in all the thirty volumes it is difficult to discover a kindly or appreciative criticism of any writer who was not a Tory. Not one generous sentiment was ever expressed concerning a political opponent, though some of them are now the ornaments of literature.

Such was William Gifford as he appears in the great *Review* of which he was the first editor. He died in 1826.

JOHN WILSON CROKER.

(1780–1857.)

As Sydney Smith was the right-hand man of Jeffrey as a contributor to the *Edinburgh Review* so John Wilson Croker was for many years the chief dependence of the editor of the *Quarterly*. For more than a quarter of a century there was not a number of the *Review* that did not contain one or more articles by him. He belongs to the slashing order of critics, but he possessed neither grace of style nor originality of thought. There is not an article he ever wrote worthy of being recalled or re-read on its own account. The only interest they now possess is derived from their connection with the *Review* and as forming a part of the literary history of the first half of the nineteenth century.

To the general reader Croker's fame comes peculiarly close to infamy. He made many enemies, and among them were two, Macaulay

and Disraeli, who have left him in anything but an enviable plight.

Everybody has read Macaulay's famous essay on Croker's edition of Boswell's "Life of Johnson," and nearly everybody is familiar with Lord Beaconsfield's novel of "Coningsby." The Mr. Rigby of the novel is intended as a portrait of Croker, and was close enough to be universally recognized when the novel appeared. The following is Mr. Rigby's description:

> Mr. Rigby had a classical retreat which he esteemed a Tusculum. There, surrounded by his busts and his books, he wrote his lampoons and articles; massacred a she liberal (it was thought no one could lash a woman like Rigby); cut up a rising genius, whose politics were different from his own, or scarified some unhappy wretch who had brought his claims before parliament, proving, by garbled extracts from official correspondence that no one could refer to, that the malcontent, instead of being a victim, was, on the contrary, a defaulter.

Between Macaulay and Croker there could be no possible common ground. That they belonged to opposing political parties is not sufficient to account for Macaulay's hostility, for there were many of his opponents with whom he held pleasant if not friendly relations, notably Sir Robert Peel and the then young Mr. Gladstone. In 1831, when writing to his sister of the success

of one of his speeches, Macaulay says: "I ought to tell you that Peel was very civil and cheered me loudly, and that impudent, leering Croker congratulated the house on the proof which I had given of my readiness. He hoped they would hear me often. See whether I do not dust that varlet's jacket for him in the next number of the 'Blue and Yellow.' I detest him more than cold boiled veal." It was at this time that Croker was getting out his edition of "Boswell's Life of Johnson," a work for which he possessed some qualifications of a high order—patience, industry, a love of minute investigation, and a complete knowlege of eighteenth century literature. He was, too, acquainted with people who had known Dr. Johnson or who were connected with his time, and from them he gathered stores of anecdote, while his position on the *Quarterly* gave him access to private papers of considerable value for his purpose. Upon the whole, it must be said that few editors of a great book have ever been better equipped than he. With a grand flourish the wotk appeared in the summer of 1831. It was in five volumes, and Croker boasted that he had added twenty-five hundred notes to those of Boswell and Malone. A cursory examination showed that the editor had taken the strangest liberties with

the text, shifting, and even cutting out, passages, adding extracts from Mrs. Piozzi, Murphy, Tyers, and Hawkins, and disfiguring Boswell's book in the most arbitrary manner, for the purpose, as he says, of giving "a complete view of Johnson's life." More extraordinary "editing" was never seen. The following September Macaulay's famous criticism appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*, and "Croker's Boswell" became the laughing-stock of the literary world. Never was "varlet's jacket" dusted so unmercifully and yet so justly.

Croker made a reply to Macaulay's strictures, but it was lame and impotent; the book, in Macaulay's language, was "smashed." Of late years it has been the habit of Croker's friends and biographers to point to the fact that "Croker's Boswell" still sells and that since its first publication more than fifty thousand have been sold. This is an entirely disingenuous statement. Not fifty thousand of the edition Macaulay reviewed has been sold. After the review the book was revised, rearranged, and most carefully re-edited. The objectionable features that had been pointed out were removed, the errors in the notes were corrected and the second edition was substantially a new work. Until Napier's edition appeared

Croker's was the standard edition, for it contains many valuable as well as curious notes.

Carlyle also fell foul of Croker in *Frazer's Magazine*, and although his review is not so well known as Macaulay's it is quite as severe and, in many respects, as entertaining.

Croker bided his turn, and when Macaulay's History appeared in 1848 he reviewed it with all the asperity he could command. But it fell flat, which led Rogers to say that Croker had "intended murder but committed suicide." Croker afterward wrote to John Murray, the publisher of the *Quarterly*, for permission to reprint his criticism on Macaulay in a separate pamphlet. Murray declined, saying: "I think there are many of your articles much better worth publishing than that."

Thackeray has drawn the character of Croker as Wenham, the factotum and agent of Lord Steyne in "Vanity Fair," and as long as that novel is read and its allusions and portraitures understood, so long will odium attach to Croker's name. An effort has been made in recent years to rehabilitate him in the public esteem. His letters, papers and biography have been published, and they show that for many years Mr. Croker lived on terms of intimacy with the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel, Sir Walter Scott,

Mr. Lockhart and many other distinguished men; that he stood high in the councils of the Tory party, was one of its recognized leaders and that an extraordinary value was attached to his opinions. He was certainly a most painstaking student of English literature and there were few men of his day who had a better knowledge of all its byways.

John Wilson Croker was born in Galway, Ireland, in 1780 and educated at Trinity College, Dublin. He was called to the bar and in 1807 was elected to parliament. For many years he held the lucrative position of Secretary to the Admiralty. He was an active and bitter Tory and opposed parliamentary reform, and it was on that question that he and Macaulay first clashed. After the Reform Bill passed in 1832 Croker refused re-election to parliament and thenceforth confined his political efforts to the pages of the *Quarterly*.

JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART,

A "QUARTERLY" REVIEWER.

(1794–1854.)

JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART succeeded Gifford as editor of the *Quarterly* and the review lost nothing of its causticity by the change. Lockhart was never hated and scorned like Gifford, but he was much more feared. He was a strong partisan and a severe and often biased critic, but he did not possess the merciless spirit of the *Quarterly's* first editor. Tom Moore, in his "Thoughts on Editors," closes the list with Lockhart:

Alas, and must I close the list
With thee, my Lockhart of the Quarterly;
So kind, with bumper in thy fist—
With pen so very gruff and tartarly.

Now in thy parlor feasting me,
Now scribbling at me from thy garret—
Till 'twixt the two in doubt I be
Which sourest is, thy wit or claret.

Lockhart is now chiefly remembered by his "Life of Sir Walter Scott," which has long been ranked as the second best biography in the language, coming next to Boswell's masterpiece. He wrote essays, novels, criticism, biographies, and poetry, and for at least three decades was one of the most prominent figures in English literary life during the first half of the nineteenth century. His Spanish ballads have long been admired as the finest of paraphrases, breathing all the spirit and go of the originals, his novels may be read with pleasure, and his biography of Burns is a most charming work.

John Gibson Lockhart was the son of a Scotch minister and was born at Cambusnethan in 1794. He was educated at Glasgow and Oxford, and as a young man settled down in Edinburgh to pursue a vocation at the bar. But his delight was in literature rather than in legal studies, and upon the establishment of *Blackwood* in 1817 he gave his aid to Professor Wilson in all manner of literary deviltries. The most famous of these was "The Chaldee Manuscript," which was a parody on the Scriptures, describing and satirizing the more prominent characters of the Scottish capital. This so scandalized all Scotland that the number had to be withdrawn. It now ranks among the

rare literary curiosities. Not one set of *Blackwood* in a hundred contains it. The dreadful manner in which it fluttered the dove-cotes of Edinburgh society, and particularly of that section of it which revolved about the *Edinburgh Review* is something that was never forgotten, and perhaps goes far to account for the influences set to work to ignore Lockhart altogether. Nevertheless, in his active life he was not a man to be ignored. His writings brought him the friendship of the chiefs of the Tory party in Edinburgh, and among these was Sir Walter Scott. This acquaintance ripened into friendship, with the further result that Lockhart soon afterward married Scott's eldest daughter. It is a descendant of this marriage, a grandaughter of Lockhart, that now owns Abbotsford and resides there.

One of his first literary ventures was a half-satire, half mystification entitled "Peter's Letters to His Kinsfolk," first introduced to public notice by a review of it in *Blackwood.* When the review appeared there was no such book, but extracts were given purporting to be taken from it and these contained so much glib satire on people well known that the public demand for it became importunate. Lockhart thereupon wrote it and the volume appeared as a second edition, there

never having been a first save in the author's imagination.

The supposed author was one Dr. Peter Morris, a Welsh physician temporarily sojourning in Edinburgh. He writes familiar letters home after the style of those that are to be found in "Humphry Clinker," in which full and gossiping accounts were given of the living celebrities of Edinburgh. The manners of the time were delineated with wonderful and often with ludicrous keenness, and the book made a most tremendous sensation. If there is one thing that Scotchmen do not like it is to have certain of their foibles held up to ridicule —perhaps there are others of the same temperament. Lockhart, in his life of Scott, modestly speaks of this book as one that "none but a very young and thoughtless person would have written." Whatever be its faults, it is certain that none but a very clever person could have written it, and whoever wishes to obtain a glimpse of Edinburgh society as it was ninety years ago can do no better than read "Peter's Letters to His Kinsfolk."

Lockhart wrote a number of novels and among them "Valerius, a Roman Story," "Reginald Dalton," "Matthew Wald," and "Adam Blair." They may even now be read with interest, but

"Adam Blair" is undoubtedly the best of them. It is laid on the same lines as Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter," though not reaching the intensity of that masterpiece of fiction. But it is a story of force and passion, illustrating how remorse for sin acts upon a generous nature, finally leading to repentance, self-sacrifice, and spiritual rest. It is a magnificent story and only lacks the one touch of genius that makes fiction immortal. And yet it is literature and deserves remembrance. "Reginald Dalton" is a story of student life at Oxford, and is a sort of forerunner of "Tom Brown." It describes undergraduate life at the great university as it was in the early days of the century, and it was highly praised when it appeared. It is now covered fathoms deep in the dust of libraries.

When he became editor of the *Quarterly* he removed to London, and for the next quarter of a century wielded enormous power in English literature and politics. As in the pages of *Blackwood* he had excoriated Keats, and those whom he had classed together as the "cockney school of poetry," so when Tennyson's volume of poems appeared in 1833 he quite as severely assailed it, reviewing the poems with great ridicule and contempt. The volume of 1842, which contained

"Locksley Hall," he treated in much the same way, and it was not until 1851, after Tennyson became laureate and had won his own public, that the *Quarterly* began to appreciate his poetry and speak of him with respect.

Lockhart's last years were filled with sorrow. His eldest boy, the Hugh Littlejohn for whom Scott had written "The Tales of a Grandfather," died in 1831. Scott died in 1832, and Anne Scott, the second daughter, in 1833, Mrs. Lockhart in 1837, and his son Walter in 1852. Only one daughter remained to him, the sole descendant of Sir Walter.

Lockhart died in 1854 and is buried in Dryburgh Abbey, at the feet of Sir Walter Scott.

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

THE third great periodical of this time was *Blackwood's Magazine*, that made its first appearance before an astonished world in October, 1817.

William Blackwood, the founder of the great publishing house, determined to start a rival publication to the *Edinburgh Review*, which would be "less ponderous, more nimble, more frequent, more familiar," as well as being Tory in politics. He secured the services of John Wilson, John Gibson Lockhart, and several other bright young wits without much sense of responsibility, and the magazine appeared. A more lively shaking up the good and staid Scotchmen of the northern metropolis never received. The first number contained the famous "Chaldee Manuscript," scandalizing, caricaturing, and libeling many of the notabilities and prominent citizens of Edinburgh. Church and society turned upon the daring magazine with such an outburst of wrath that the obnoxious article had to be recalled and suppressed.

It is rare that a full set of *Blackwood* can be found containing it.

But the publisher persevered, and by 1820 the magazine had established its reputation for slashing criticism and overwhelming gayety. In that year Wilson began the series of papers known as "Noctes Ambrosianæ," which were kept up for a period of fifteen years to the delight of thousands and thousands of readers. Wilson was the principal author, but Maginn and Lockhart occasionally contributed an article.

The scene of "The Noctes" purports to be Ambrose's tavern, a well-known resort in Edinburgh, where a select company meet to talk over the events, politics, and literature of the time.

The chief interlocutor of these imaginary conversations is Christopher North, a gouty gentleman of almost three-score years and ten. How his earlier life had been spent we have no distinct account, although we get glimpses of it here and there, but when we meet him he is in affluent circumstances, and as the editor of *Blackwood's Magazine*, in possession of an inexhaustible mine of wealth. He complains occasionally of the gout and of other infirmities, but notwithstanding these, and his advanced age, he is always ready for every sort of physical adventure. His crutch

becomes a leaping pole, he hunts, fishes, and even "puts on the gloves" with all the energy of youth, and altogether he is a very remarkable septuagenarian. He and his friends consume an astonishing quantity of solids and fluids, outrivaling even Pantagruel. Sometimes it is in the shape of a regular dinner. One we recall, which was opened by a dozen kinds of soup, followed by a corresponding number of dishes in fish, flesh, and fowl, each a course by itself. More usually the refection is supper, where oysters are consumed by the hundred, not without more solid dishes, which are sometimes disposed of by each member of the party appropriating one; North the turkey, Hogg the round of beef, and Tickler a mighty pie. Whisky galore is introduced on every imaginable occasion before, at, and after the food, porter and ale are profusely swallowed, and gallons of toddy follow. Sometimes the heroes appear in a very questionable state of sobriety. And thus in jocund mirth with much good talk their nights were passed. Nothing like it has ever been seen except in fairyland.

The conception of the idea of these papers has been claimed for each of the distinguished men who contributed to them—Lockhart, Maginn, Hogg, and Wilson—but there is now but little

question that the merit of them belongs almost altogether to Wilson. He is the Christopher North, a man far advanced in years, but still possessed of herculean strength, and with an omniscience that leaves no question unsettled. The principal figure and chief speaker is the Ettrick Shepherd, into whose mouth Wilson puts many of his best and most pungent sayings. The third principal figure was "Timothy Tickler," whose original was Wilson's uncle, Robert Sym, a well-known citizen of Edinburgh. He holds a sort of common-sense position between the chief interlocutors, North and the Shepherd, and has a sturdy way of bringing them down from their altitudes which gives a rare interest to the dialogue. Other characters are brought in once in awhile, but these three are the chief, and they indulge in the finest conversation and the most Gargantuan eating and drinking ever known in the world. "Indeed," said a humorous and indulgent lady correspondent of Wilson's, "indeed, I really think you eat too many oysters in the 'Noctes.'" And there can be very little question but what they did. Yet they were but Barmecide feasts, and Wilson has said that in fact he never was in Ambrose's more than half a dozen times in all his life.

"The Noctes" were collected and published

in five volumes, with explanatory notes, and there are few books that contain so much of literary history or are really more valuable to the student of literature. Besides this they are full of comical extravaganzas, vivacious talk, eloquent and poetic dreamings, and all sorts of fancies nowhere else to be found in English literature.

Blackwood's Magazine long since sowed all its wild oats and became a staid, respectable and highly meritorious periodical. But the brilliant days of "Maga" are still worthy of recall.

PROFESSOR JOHN WILSON,

ONE OF THE KINGS OF MEN.

(1785–1854.)

THE republication of some of the earlier works of Professor John Wilson, the famous "Christopher North" of *Blackwood's Magazine* of seventy-five years ago, will give new pleasure to a generation that never knew, or have known but little, of that famous grog-drinking, prize-fighting teacher of moral philosophy, who was a prime favorite with our grandfathers, and was one of the chief characters of Edinburgh town in the days of George IV.

For years and years the name of "Christopher North" was a household word wherever *Blackwood's Magazine* was known, a rallying point and tower of strength to the old Tory party. Carlyle in his reminiscences says:

The broad-shouldered, stately bulk of the man struck me; his flashing eye, copious disheveled hair, and rapid, uncon-

cerned progress like a plow through stubble. Wilson had much nobleness of heart and many traits of noble genius, but the central tie beam seemed wanting always ; very long ago I perceived in him the most irreconcilable contradictions, Toryism with sans-culottism ; a noble, loyal, and religious nature not strong enough to vanquish the perverse element it is born into. Hence, a being all split into precipitous chasms and the wildest volcanic tumults. * * * Wilson seems to me always by far the most gifted of our literary men, either then or still.

Wilson's life reads almost like a romance. He was born in Paisley, Scotland, the son of a rich manufacturer, in 1785, and was educated at Glasgow and Oxford. As a young man he was noted for his strength, activity, and eccentricity. He was a robust six-footer that could run, jump, swim, and fight with any one going. He was a man thoroughly alive and helped in all ways to keep up athletic sports—even prize-fighting. He was noted as a boxer, and once he met with a rough character as he was passing a bridge, the man obstructing his way. Wilson offered to fight him, and the man made no objection, saying that he was so and so, a well-known professional pugilist. This daunted Wilson not a jot. Off went his coat and in a few minutes he polished off the prize-fighter in a style that astonished him. Gasping from his defeat he could only say:

"You are either Jack Wilson or the devil." In his literary reminiscences De Quincey says of him: "Cock fighting, wrestling, pugilistic contests, boat racing, horse racing, all enjoyed Mr. Wilson's patronage; all were occasionally honored by his personal participation. I mention this in no unfriendly spirit toward Professor Wilson; on the contrary, these propensities grew out of his ardent temperament and his constitutional endowments—his strength, speed, and agility—and being confined to the period of youth can do him no dishonor among the candid and the judicious."

In 1820, having lost his fortune through the default of a dishonest trustee of his estate, he was elected to the professorship of moral philosophy in the University of Edinburgh over so able a competitor as Sir William Hamilton, one of the finest scholars and ablest metaphysicians of the time, but politics in those days swayed such choices more than qualifications. Three years prior to this he had allied himself to *Blackwood's Magazine*, then first started, and though he may not have been, strictly speaking, the editor of "Maga," there is no doubt that for many years he exercised a sort of censorship over all contributions, and had an unrestricted right of publishing what-

ever he chose to write. It was for "Maga" that he wrote his still famous papers, "The Noctes Ambrosianæ," and it is by these papers that his fame in literature will be tested. And to-day it makes very good reading, and whoever wishes to know what was currently thought and said of the literary productions of the early part of the present century should at least turn the pages of "Noctes Ambrosianæ." Lockhart had something to do with them, and Maginn contributed a few numbers, but the main work was done by Professor Wilson, who delighted to draw his own portrait as Christopher North. The whole series has been collected and published, and they belong to the literature of the past. Whoever reads them must be prepared to find a good deal of prejudice on the high Tory side of literature and politics. Lots of scurrilous flings will be found, not only at the cockneys, Lamb, Hunt, and Hazlitt, but even at Macaulay and those who adopted the liberal side of English politics. But any one who can accommodate himself to these matters—as surely most Americans can—much more any one who can enter into the spirit of those past days, merry and leisurely as they were —will find the "Noctes" most delightful reading. The wit, the humor, the apparent reality of it all,

and the dramatic excellence of the whole give an interest rarely realized save in the very highest forms of literary composition. And then there are to be found on almost every page gems of thought and of expression which merit the highest praise. The most striking attraction of the "Noctes" is the sunshiny heartiness and humor that pervade the whole, to be found in innumerable and indescribable bits, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs of the conversations between the main characters.

Wilson's works have been collected in twelve volumes, and there is much in them that is readable, though the "Noctes" forms the main feature. His life was lovable, and as a teacher and lecturer he was highly honored. It was his habit to take his pupils out for a holiday excursion to the Scottish lakes, filling their young heads and hearts with a passionate love of nature and aspirations of beauty. Of all the men of his time he was the most thoroughly human, and had the most perfect sympathy with his fellows. Carlyle describes one meeting with him :

Last night I supped with John Wilson, a man of the most fervid temperament, fond of all stimulating things from tragic poetry down to whisky punch. He snuffed and smoked cigars and drank liquors and talked in the most indescribable

style. Daylight came on us before we parted—indeed, it was towards three o'clock as the professor and I walked home, smoking as we went. He is a broad, sincere man of six feet, with long, disheveled, flax-colored hair, and two blue eyes keen as an eagle's."

Wilson wrote prose and poetry for many years. His poem, "The Isle of Palms," has been classed with the best of Scott's. It is as well worth reading as "Marmion" or "The Lay of the Last Minstrel." The most of his other work was done in a hurry, and can hardly be said to belong to literature. He was a most rapid writer, and he is credited with having on one occasion actually written fifty-six pages of print for *Blackwood* in two days, and in the years of its double numbers he often contributed from one hundred to one hundred and fifty pages a month.

Necessarily such matter could not be of the highest order of literary merit, but even to-day the student of literature need not disdain it. Wilson was one of the kings among men, and his loving and loyal nature will always commend itself to those who delight in literary biography.

WILLIAM MAGINN,

SCHOLAR, HUMORIST, BOHEMIAN,

(1793–1842.)

CHIEF among English magazinists and first of bohemians, from whom Thackeray drew the more salient characteristics of Fred Bayham, Warrington and Captain Shandon, stands William Maginn, LL.D., scholar, humorist, essayist and poet. The once famous "Doctor" is now nothing but a name, if even so much, but there was a time that he was looked upon as one whose name was "writ large" in the pantheon of English literature. No one seemed more assured of permanent fame, and certainly not any one, not Jeffrey nor Sidney Smith nor Wilson nor Lockhart, was more popular or more in demand as a writer. As a scholar he was ranked with Porson, as a humorist and satirist with Rabelais and Swift. Why, with all his learning and wit, his prodigious facility for acquiring languages and his command of every literary device

and art, he should have fallen into such neglect can hardly be explained upon any ordinary hypothesis, and must be attributed simply to that freak of fortune which awards favors blindly. He was careless in his habits and loved the bottle, but this does not account for it altogether. Byron committed greater excesses and Coleridge had less self-control, yet on the score of native genius it is not so certain that either should be more assured of immortality than Maginn. It might be said, it has been said, that if he had been more steady he might have produced more lasting work, but this is at least questionable. His miscellaneous writings have been collected, and they are just as surely literature as any of the miscellaneous writings of De Quincey. It might be that if Maginn had devoted himself entirely to Shakespeare and the classics we might have had something that scholars would prize, but we never should have had "The Maxims of Odoherty" or the song of "The Irishman and the Lady."

Maginn was a man of his time, a literary bohemian in those good old days when a certain amount of scholarship and a capacity for drink were necessary qualifications for the profession. He was born in Cork in 1793, and was the son of an Irish schoolmaster. His talents were so pre-

cocious that in his tenth year he was advanced enough to enter Trinity College, Dublin, and he graduated with distinction in the classics before he was fourteen. In addition to the regular studies he also acquired a knowledge of Hebrew, Sanscrit and Syriac. Through life he had an extraordinary aptitude for languages; and he knew and could converse fluently in nearly all the modern tongues. Maginn at first followed his father's profession, and became a school teacher, a vocation in which he was successful enough, but his true bent was toward letters. It was the fermenting period in magazine literature, and of the new magazines *Blackwood* was making the the greatest sensation. The political tone of this periodical suited exactly with Maginn's tastes, and to it he sent his contributions. His first article was a Latin translation of the ancient ballad of "Chevy Chase," which was so complete in meter and sense as to attract universal attention. The following is the opening stanza :

The Percy out of Northumberland,
And a vow to God made he
That he would hunt in the mountains
Of Cheviot within days three,
In the maugre of the doughty Douglas,
And all that with him be.

Which was thus rendered into Latin:

Persæus ex Northumbria
Vovebat, Diis iratis,
Vernare inter dies tres
In montibus Cheviates,
Contemptis forti Douglaso,
Et Omnibus cognatis.

This feat of turning English verse into Latin rhyme has been common enough since Maginn's time, but he was among the first that attempted it, and his performances in this respect have never been excelled.

Maginn became a favored contributor to *Blackwood*, and under the name of Ensign Morgan Odoherty figures as a chief character in a number of the "Noctes Ambrosianæ." He wrote several of these, and his famous song, the "Irishman and the Lady," which has often, in recent years, been attributed to Thackeray, appeared in one of the earlier "Noctes." Most readers will remember the first verse at least:

There was a lady lived in Leith,
A lady very stylish, man,
And yet, in spite of all her teeth,
She fell in love with an Irishman;
A nasty, ugly Irishman,
A wild, tremendous Irishman.
A tearing, swearing, thumping, bumping,
Ramping, roaring Irishman.

When *Fraser's* magazine was started in 1830 Maginn became principal contributor and partial editor of it, and he made it almost as notorious as *Blackwood's* had been. He removed to London and became one of the social lions for a time, but the pace was too great for him. He could not resist the power of the bottle, and he sank inevitably into poverty and degradation. Many of his writings, particularly "The Maxims of Odoherty," are redolent of rum punch and drams of various sorts. They are pervaded by an aroma of intoxication, and they thus mark in sharp contrast the progress society, literary and other, has made in the past fifty years. It is partially owing to this flavor of alcohol that permeates so much that he has written that his writings are now so nearly forgotten.

Nevertheless Maginn must always remain an interesting figure in our literature. He is the most conspicuous representative of that race of literary political writers, loose living and hard hitting, who flourished in England from the time of the establishment of the *Edinburgh Review*, followed by *The Quarterly* and *Blackwood*, down to very recent times. During that period, literary criticism was largely influenced by political opinion, and Maginn like Gifford, Crocker, or Lock-

hart, could see no merit in anything written by a Whig. His contempt for sober men was only equaled by his hatred of Whigs. He reviewed the "Adonais," heaping ridicule and contempt on both Shelley and Keats and maintaining that every two lines out of three were sheer nonsense. Had he lived he would have changed his mind, for no man ever lived who was more alive to the spirit of literature, but for the moment he allowed his political prejudice to bias his judgment. But we must now take him as we find him, and while there is much in his life and work that we are bound to deplore, we will go far before we find prose so spirited and vigorous, or verse so facile and various as his. To enjoy much of it we must enter into the spirit of the time in which he wrote. He must be taken with his environment. This may require some effort, but whoever takes the trouble will find a deal of pleasure in the society of this

> Slashing, dashing, smashing,
> Lashing, thrashing, hashing, Irishman.

One of the main interests that centers about Maginn and his works is that he was the literary father of Thackeray. The great novelist was eighteen years his junior, and he evidently

made a careful study of Maginn's methods, and is indebted to him for many a favorite allusion and quotation. So similar is much of their work, for they were both contributors to *Fraser's*, that a number of Maginn's pieces have been attributed to Thackeray. But the pupil was greater than the master. Maginn's humor does not possess the rich quality of Thackeray. The vein of tenderness and human sympathy that comes to the surface in the pages of "Pendennis" and "The Newcomes," giving pathos to even the bitterest satire, is not so apparent in what Maginn has written. The doctor was one of the best of good fellows and was ever generous and kindly in action, but he could never see anything but villainy and villains. Thackeray, on the contrary, could say a good word even for such a rascal as Barnes Newcome, and could even say something in extenuation for the "Old Campaigner." But Maginn had more fun in him than Thackeray and was a keen enough observer of society. Some of the "Maxims of Odoherty" are very acute, as where he says: "Mediocrity is always disgusting, except of stature in a woman." And: "The next best thing to a really good woman is a good-natured one."

FRANCIS MAHONY,

"FATHER PROUT."

(1804–1867.)

"FATHER PROUT" came as a dancing ray of sunshine after a murky day, and the reading world awakened to a new sensation. Most assuredly here was something new, and a writer who had his languages at his finger tips and tongue's end. He was a brilliant Irishman who for several years was associated with Maginn on *Fraser's Magazine*. They were both Corkonians, but Maginn was the elder by ten or eleven years and was already established as one of the editors of *Fraser's* when Mahony arrived in London in the early part of 1834, when he was about thirty years of age. He had been bred to the priesthood, a profession for which he had no vocation, though he made strenuous efforts to join the order of the Jesuits in the early days of his studies. But the fathers rejected him. He was, however, ordained a

priest through his own persistence and self-will, afterwards to his life-long regret. In any other profession he would have reached undoubted eminence. Handicapped by that, he gained eminence in none.

In London Mahony soon joined the *Fraserians* and was hail fellow in that convivial band. He wrote a series of papers that ran from April, 1834, to December, 1836, the most original in conception and polyglot in character that ever emanated from any pen. They were the famous "Reliques of Father Prout," and purported to be the work of a parish priest of that name, of "Watergrass Hill," near Cork. The good father, of course, was the creation of Mahony's genius, just as Jededian Cleishbotham was of Scott's, but he became enormously popular and gave great vogue to the magazine.

The second paper, "A Plea for Pilgrimages," is a serio-comic rhapsody in praise of pilgrimages, and then goes on to describe a pilgrimage to the Blarney stone made by Father Prout in company with Sir Walter Scott. It is an exquisite piece of fooling and classic drollery, in which the good priest and Sir Walter discourse most learnedly on the origin and history of the Blarney stone, and how at last it got to the County of Cork. Father

Prout calls it "the most valuable remnant of Ireland's ancient glory, the most precious lot of her Phœnician inheritance." Compared with it neither the musical stone of Memnon, nor the lapidary talisman of Lydian Gyges, nor the colossal granite shaped into a sphinx of Egypt, nor Stonehenge, nor the Pelasgic walls of Italy's Palæstrina, offer so many attractions. "What stone in the world, save this alone, can communicate to the tongue that suavity of speech, and that splendid effrontery so necessary to get through life? Without this resource how could Brougham have managed to delude the English public, or Dan O'Connell to gull even his own countrymen?"

Then we are told that this palladium of Ireland was brought originally from Phœnicia, and a large amount of classical learning and allusion is brought up to prove it. The climax of the paper is reached when the then popular song, "The Groves of Blarney," is given in French, Greek and Latin verse, while Father Prout declares that Millikin, the author of the song, was simply a translator from the Greek original. "Indeed," says the reverend father, "I have discovered, when abroad, in the library of Cardinal Mazarin, an old Greek manuscript, which after

diligent examination I am convinced must be the oldest and princeps editio of the song." The article is a rare piece of humor, as indeed every one of them is.

It is in his paper entitled "The Rogueries of Tom Moore" that he gives to the world his own superb lyric, "The Shandon Bells," beloved by all readers.

Mahony survived Maginn twenty-five years, dying at Paris in 1867. His late years were passed in Rome and Paris. In the former city he was a brilliant correspondent of the London *Daily News*.

WILLIAM HAZLITT,

GREAT ENGLISH CRITIC.

(1778–1830.)

RARE as great dramatists and poets are, great critics are still more rare. In all our literature I can think of barely half a dozen, and the right of every one of them has at times been questioned. Dr. Johnson too often allowed his prejudices to affect his judgment; Jeffrey was acute but narrow; Professor Wilson permitted partisan politics to sway him, and so did Lockhart, though the latter when at the head of the *Quarterly* wrote some masterpieces of criticism. Macaulay had his limitations which he willingly acknowledged. Southey was an excellent man of letters but not a critic in any high sense. Coleridge when he chose, and Carlyle, wrote masterly criticisms, but these only formed a small part of their literary work. William Hazlitt and De Quincey made criticism the larger part of their literary vocation, and are properly entitled to be called great critics.

Hazlitt's range was wide. He wrote on men and manners, life and books, art and politics. Metaphysics was not too attenuated nor the drama too near for his genius. His subjects are as varied as the departments of literature. He delighted in the Elizabethans, but he also was familiar with every epoch of English literature, with the wits of the Restoration, with the Queen Anne's men, with the Johnsonian era and with the moderns, his contemporaries. Shakespeare and Milton, Dryden and Pope, Goldsmith and Gray, Wordsworth and Byron and Scott all came under his judgment and passed before him in review, and in his pages may be found essays on philosophy and divinity, poetry and politics, tragedy and comedy. Harriet Martineau called him "the prince of critics," and certain it is that his critical essays have great vigor and originality, and abound in acute opinions, and where his prejudices were not involved, in unerring judgments. He had a passionate love of truth, and his appreciation of literature was wide and discriminating. He did not always treat his contemporaries fairly, being swayed by political and personal prejudices, but in regard to the mighty men of the past he may be followed with confidence. Here his purpose was pure and earnest, and whoever reads him

will surely seek the writers of whom he discourses to enjoy more fully the beauties and merits he points out. He is one of the most suggestive of writers and his pages teem with gems of thought, expressed often with brilliancy and always in idiomatic and easy flowing language. He was indeed an unequal writer, for he wrote voluminously for more than a quarter of a century, and his published works number thirty-five volumes. He wrote for his daily bread, and at times hurriedly and carelessly, but his general level of excellence is very high. He had an enthusiastic appreciation of what is best in literature, a sound theory of criticism, and a style of expression both felicitous and moderate. He rarely indulged in paradox, and he treated high literary questions with acuteness and impartiality. It was only when his furious prejudices were involved that he lost the judicial habit. His lectures on the Elizabethan poets have the highest merit and the introduction to them is the best thing of the kind that has ever been written. His treatment of the dramatists of the Restoration is superior to Lamb's, Leigh Hunt's, or Macaulay's. So, too, his lectures on the English novelists, Richardson, Fielding, Sterne and Smollett, are of the highest merit. Indeed in all past regions of our literature

he stands unequaled as critic and writer, and may be always read with instruction and delight.

William Hazlitt was the son of a Unitarian clergyman, and was born at Maidstone, April 10, 1778. His father knew Benjamin Franklin, and sympathized with the Americans in the war for independence. After the war he came to America with his family, and remained four years, preaching and lecturing in Philadelphia and in Boston. In the latter city he founded the first Unitarian Church. He returned to England, and William was educated at private schools and the Unitarian College at Hackney. When he was twenty he met Coleridge, then a Unitarian minister. In his first essay, "My First Acquaintance With Poets," he tells of that meeting, and of the friendship that grew up between them. Through Coleridge he also became acquainted with Wordsworth, Southey and Lamb. These acquaintances powerfully attracted him to literature, but he at first essayed portrait painting. After a few years he gave it up, though Northcote said that he would have made a great painter if he had devoted himself entirely to art. He then commenced journalism, and became a reporter and dramatic critic on the *Morning Chronicle*. It was in this paper that his admirable theatrical criticisms appeared. His

great favorite was Edmund Kean, but he was equally an admirer of Mrs. Siddons. He also became a contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*, to Leigh Hunt's paper, the *Examiner*, and subsequently to the *London Magazine*, the periodical in which the "Essays of Elia" first appeared. He delivered several courses of lectures, in which his best criticisms appear. He wrote also much on general topics, such as "On Going a Journey," "The Love of Life," "The Fear of Death," "On People With One Idea," "Of Persons One Would Wish to Have Seen." The latter is extremely entertaining, and relates the conversation on the subject that occurred at Lamb's one evening. The last essay he wrote is "The Sick Chamber," and was written a few weeks before his death in September, 1830. It concludes with this tribute to books: "I feel as I read, that if the stage shows us the masks of men and the pageant of the world, books let us into their souls and lay open to us the secrets of our own. They are the first and last, the most homefelt, the most heartfelt of all our enjoyments!"

His two principal and extended works are "Conversations with Northcote," and the "Life of Napoleon Bonaparte." Hazlitt was a great admirer of Napoleon, and sympathized keenly

with the revolution that produced him. Though well written, this work does not rank high.

Hazlitt's domestic life was not happy, owing partly to his own temper and partly to his wife's lack of sympathy and ignorance of household management. The ill-matched pair afterward separated and were divorced. Hazlitt was unjustly treated by the *Quarterly* and *Blackwood's Magazine*, and denounced as an incendiary, a radical, a Bonapartist and an immoral scribbler. That was the way literary criticism displayed itself in those days.

One of the singular passages in Hazlitt's life is related in his book entitled "Liber Amoris." It tells of his foolish infatuation for Sarah Walker, the daughter of his lodging-house keeper. De Quincey calls it "an explosion of frenzy. He threw out his clamorous anguish to the clouds and to the winds and to the air, caring not who might listen, who might sympathize, or who might sneer—the sole necessity for him was to empty his over-burdened spirit." It was an absurd episode, and his divinity having married a younger and less imaginative lover, Hazlitt contracted a second marriage with, a widow of some means. This was in 1824. They traveled for a year on the Continent, and then Hazlitt returned to

London alone. His wife never rejoined him. It is evident that Hazlitt's temper and wayward and unmethodical habits made him a very uncomfortable companion. One of his most finished works is called "The Spirit of the Age; or Contemporary Portraits." It includes sketches of Coleridge, Scott, Wordsworth, Byron, Cobbett, Gifford, and a dozen others of the notable men of the time. Byron's portrait is a masterpiece of critical analysis.

The testimony of his friends—and they were many—is that Hazlitt possessed great qualities of head and heart worthy of respect and affection. He was unselfish and devoid of deception. He hated pretension, was never dishonest, nor cruel, nor treacherous. He has left a decided impress on English literature, for he was, with all his limitations, a very great critic.

CHARLES LAMB,

MOST GENIAL OF ESSAYISTS.

(1775–1834.)

SWINBURNE calls Lamb the "best beloved of English writers," and he certainly possesses a lovable quality, manifest in everything he has written, that draws his readers into closest sympathy with him. He shares also with Shakespeare the distinction of being called "gentle"; not in the sense of pity or commiseration, but as being kindly and full of sympathy with humanity.

His style is a marvel of ease, fulness, quaintness and beauty. It is formed upon the profoundest study of the Elizabethan dramatists, and yet it is modern and even new. There is the flavor of antiquity about it—a use of words often archaic, but just as often coined in imitation of the obsolete; but there are no conceits or far-fetched allusions. He puts us under the spell of a literature which he knows, but which we only faintly know. Then come the turns of quaint

humor which excite our mirth and give him his perennial charms. He has, too, a robust sense, a hatred of shams, and a philosophy of life that remind one of Dr. Johnson. He loves the solid earth whereon he stands, and delights in the "visible, warm motion" of his being. He enjoys the world and its reasonable pleasures. He discourses on the advantages of being alive; not with levity, but as one who has been tried and ennobled by affliction, and yet sees the happiness that may come to him who does not seek too much. Who is there who has not at least heard of, if he has not read the immortal "Dissertation on Roast Pig"? Lamb likes to write about things good to eat. "I am no Quaker with my food," he says. "I confess I am not indifferent to the kinds of it. Those unctuous morsels of deer's flesh were not made to be received with dispassionate services. I hate a man who swallows it, affecting not to know what he is eating. I suspect his taste in higher matters. I shrink instinctively from one who professes to like minced veal. There is a physiognomical character in the taste for food. C— holds that a man cannot have a pure mind who refuses apple dumplings. I am not certain but he is right." And so he dwells from time to time on the pleasures of life,

and of the contentment and happiness which is within the reach of all.

Many of the essays are autobiographical, and in several of them he draws the portraits of his grandmother, his father, sister and brother. He describes his sister Mary under the name of "Cousin Bridget"; and there are many pleasing passages about her. She had her brother's love for books.

> She was tumbled early, by accident or design, into a spacious closet of good old English reading; without much selection or prohibition, and browsed at will upon that fair and wholesome pasturage. Had I twenty girls they should be brought up exactly in this fashion. I know not whether their chances of wedlock might not be diminished by it, but I can answer for it, that it makes (if the worst comes to the worst), most incomparable old maids.

Lamb devoted his life to his sister and her safety and happiness. The taint of insanity was in their blood. In a paroxysm of madness Mary had slain their mother, and from that moment Charles made himself, with rare self-sacrifice, her self-appointed guardian. He himself had an attack of mania in his boyhood, but it never returned; but in the case of Mary it was recurrent. The attack was preceded by symptoms which enabled them to take precautions, and at such times they would go together to an asylum where she

would remain until she had recovered. This is the tremendous fact in Lamb's history, and with this self-imposed duty, he gave up all thought of marrying. In the essays and letters we obtain occasional glimpses of a "Sweet Alice" upon whom his affections in youth had been placed. This was the one romance of his life, and a tender memory to his dying day. He lived for his sister, and every concurrent testimony shows that their lives were as near to social happiness as human nature can aspire to. In his essay entitled "Old China," he gives a picture of their domestic life. He begins by declaring his "feminine partiality" for old china, but after a few paragraphs he digresses, as is his habit, into recollections of his past struggles. He had taken tea with his cousin Bridget, using a new set of china, which led him to remark on their better fortunes enabling them to indulge in such luxuries, "when a passing sentiment seemed to overshade the brows of my companion. I am quick at detecting these summer clouds in Bridget. 'I wish the good old times would come again,' she said, 'when we were not quite so rich. I do not mean that I want to be poor, but there was a middle state,' so she was pleased to ramble on, 'in which I am sure we were a great deal happier. A purchase is but a pur-

chase, now that you have money enough and to spare. Formerly it used to be a triumph. When we coveted a cheap luxury (and O! how much ado I had to get you to consent in those days!) we were used to having a debate two or three days before, and to weigh the for and against, and think what we might spare it out of, and what saving we could hit upon that might be an equivalent. A thing was worth buying then, when we felt the money that we paid for it." Then she reminds him how he wore an old suit until it grew threadbare, all because of an old folio of Beaumont and Fletcher which he must have.

Tender and pathetic are the reminiscences and hoarded memories that run through these essays, never to be forgotten by those who have once fully enjoyed them.

Books were Lamb's solace and enjoyment in life, and literature his recreation. He gained his livelihood as a clerk in the employ of the East India Company. When he was fifty years of age they pensioned him, and he lived nine years to enjoy his pension. In his whole life he was beholden to no one, but was himself always the helper of others, with purse ever open to those who needed assistance. Upon the improvident and helpless Coleridge, who was his friend from

boyhood, he bestowed a constant bounty. He offered assistance to every one whom he thought needed it, even before it was asked; and he did this often at no little self-sacrifice. His only personal extravagance was in buying books, and of these he speaks with constant and never failing affection. He loved them as a lover his mistress, and Leigh Hunt tells how he once saw him kiss Chapman's Homer. He reveled in the Elizabethan age, and no writer has ever described that period so well as he. In a great measure he revived the literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and did more than any other to make those forgotten worthies beautiful and lovable to modern readers. To him "the sweetest names, and which carry a perfume in the mention, were Kit Marlowe, Drayton, Drummond of Hawthornden and Cowley;" and with these and many others is his own name imperishably associated.

He feasted on these noble books. "I dream away my life in other's speculations," he says in his essay on Books and Reading. "I love to lose myself in other men's minds. I cannot sit and think; books think for me. I have no repugnances. 'Shaftesbury' is not too genteel for me, nor 'Jonathan Wild' too low. I can read anything which I call a book."

The "Essays of Elia" fill the heart of every reader with kindliness and human sympathy, and causes the reader to think better of humanity. No book you will ever read will give you more delight, or will cultivate in you that love for literature, without which all reading is vain.

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

(1785–1859).

One of the masters of English prose writing is Thomas De Quincey, and there are few volumes that I would more unhesitatingly recommend to the student ambitious of acquiring a good style than the most of his. His writings are both instructive and delightful, and cover a wide range of thought and scholarship. His subjects are of the most diverse kinds, while the under-current of reference and allusion carry one into regions of rarest learning. He had read widely over a vast extent of out-of-the-way literature, and his capacious memory furnished it forth to him at command. From childhood he had a passion for reading, and his knowledge is better entitled to the name of encyclopedia than that of any other modern person I know of, save, perhaps, Macaulay and William Hamilton. And yet he never wrote anything of great length—no extended work. His novel occupies barely half of one of

the duodecimo volumes into which his works have been collected. His writings are almost altogether magazine articles and were written to provide a livelihood. He did not commence authorship until he was thirty-five, and then only because his income from his father's estate failed him, through the wrong-doing of a trustee. For forty years he continued to write for the magazines and reviews of his time, and it is these supposed ephemera that have made him one of the chiefs of English literature. It was not until near the close of his life that these widely scattered articles were collected into volumes, the first step in that direction having been taken by the American publisher, James Ticknor Fields.

In the year 1821 an article appeared in the *London Magazine*, entitled "Confessions of an English Opium Eater," that attracted wide attention. The *London* was the chief rival of *Blackwood* in those days and had a notable corps of contributors. Some of the last minor poems of John Keats appeared in it, and a series of essays under the signature of "Elia" were very popular. Hazlitt was a contributor, and Barry Cornwall. A young humorist, Thomas Hood, by name, was a sort of assistant editor and was becoming known for writings both grave and gay.

Thomas Griffith Wainwright, prisoner and forger, whose miserable and despicable career ended many years later in a convicts' hut in Australia, contributed articles on "The Fine Arts," and altogether it was a remarkably well sustained and brilliant magazine. In this galaxy De Quincey soon became a bright particular star, and was a constant contributor while the magazine lasted, which was only a few years. "The Confessions" made the world acquainted with his name, for it was a self revelation only surpassed by those of Montaigne and Rousseau. It was published anonymously, but the wide spread curiosity and the unusual demand for more, forbade that the authorship should long remain a secret. The signature of "The Opium Eater" was thenceforward an attraction. Most assuredly here was no common writer, for whatever the topic, it was treated with superlative skill. His articles were therefore in demand, but his peculiar habits and disposition made him but a fitful writer, and an altogether unreliable contributor. When the *London* failed, he was attracted to *Blackwood;* the editor, Professor Wilson, being his warm personal friend. In one of the "Noctes," Wilson calls him "a man of a million," and in another, where De Quincey was supposed to be a guest at one of

those Ambrosian feasts which Wilson's imagination has made famous, Christopher North rises and says: "Gentlemen, I propose in one sentence, with all the honors, the health of Thomas De Quincey—a person of the highest intellectual and imaginative powers—a metaphysician, logician and a political economist of the first order—a profound and comprehensive scholar—a perfect gentleman and one of the best of men." A note states that the health was drunk with "prodigious acclamation." A response from "The Opium Eater" follows in which De Quincey's manner and style are hit off in the happiest manner. "The Confessions" are based upon fact though in certain details somewhat embellished. De Quincey was the son of a Manchester merchant, who died when the boy was seven years of age—he was born in 1785. He was small and delicate, petted by every one except his mother and elder brother, who so tyrannized him that when the latter died at the age of sixteen, De Quincey expressed his profound relief at his escape from the yoke. The mother simply failed to understand her sensitive child.

He was brought up among books and was well taught from the beginning, but the restraints of school and home were irksome to him and at the

age of seventeen he ran away to London. The story of his wanderings and destitution in the inhospitable streets of the cruel city, of his rescue by the unhappy girl only more unfortunate than himself, and of his return home, makes one of the most graphic and pathetic passages in "The Confessions." And this is representative of his long career. At intervals he would disappear from home and family and friends—a strange, restless being, impatient of the restraints of social life. He resided for several years at Oxford, where he gained a high reputation for scholarship, and he next appears in the North of England lake region, where he became the friend of Wordsworth, Wilson, Southey, and other residents of that famed locality. There he married and settled down in a cottage, and there he commenced his literary career. It was at Oxford he acquired the opium habit, and he relates that in the course of a few years he could take eight thousand drops, or seven wine glasses of laudanum in a day. This allowance, after a fearful struggle, he largely reduced, but the habit remained with him all his life. That under such circumstances he wrote so much and so well, is as strange as many of the other incidents in his strange career.

He has two styles of writing; one familiar and

humorous, not as delicate as Lamb's, and often extravagant and wayward, and the other stately, ornate, imaginative and poetic. Every line is gleaming splendor.

In the humorous style there is "Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts," though the subject is too ghastly for the ordinary sense of humor. He sometimes seems too familiar and colloquial, and even undignified. He will address Josephus, the Jewish historian, through a whole article as "Joe," or describe Magliabecchi, the Florentine librarian, as "Mag." In his article on Dr. Parr, he invariably calls him "Sam." Occasionally he will utter the exclamation, "O Crimini," and in other ways indulges somewhat in horse-play.

Of his fictions, "The Spanish Nun" is the best, and the "Life of Richard Bentley" the best of his biographies. "The Memorials of Grasmere," "The English Stage Coach," and "Suspiria De Profundis," are the most imaginative of his writings. The latter contains that marvel of lyrical prose, "The Three Ladies of Sorrow," which are a permanent addition to literature and mythology.

All his writings on the principles and science of literature; on rhetoric, style, language; on

Pope, Milton, Southey, Landor, Wordsworth's poetry, and the literary history of the eighteenth century, are wonderfully fine, and will repay constant study. And so will nearly everything he wrote.

RICHARD HARRIS BARHAM,

A FAMOUS HUMORIST.

(1788–1845.)

Does anybody read the "Ingoldsby Legends" in these days? Those grotesque and exuberantly rhymed stories, full of fancy and frolic that convulsed our fathers and grandfathers, and would amuse the present generation of readers if more modern stories and poems did not crowd them out.

Of course, there are those who read them, just as there are always persons reading the good things of literature. They have plenty of vitality and can never be entirely forgotten, but perhaps they are not read as much as they should be, and certainly our humorous poets do not imitate their style as they might and suffer no loss. They abound in double rhymes that are peculiarly felicitous and accurate, as well as being delightfully funny.

They purport to have been found by Thomas

Ingoldsby among the old papers and documents that have descended to him from a former generation, and are more or less concerned with the legends of the family, and hence the name.

They were written by Richard Harris Barham, who was born at Canterbury, December 6, 1788. He was educated at St. Paul's School and at Brazenose College, Oxford, and then entered holy orders. After a few years' service in country parishes he obtained a minor canonry in St. Paul's Cathedral. He early turned to literary pursuits, and finally, after some unsuccessful attempts, found his vein in "The Ingoldsby Legends," which first appeared in *Bentley's Miscellany* in 1837. They immediately became popular and gave the author high and permanent rank among the foremost of English humorists. Except Hood alone, no English writer of modern times has produced so much laughter-stimulating poetry as Barham.

As some of the more recent English poets have naturalized the French vilanelle, rondel and ballade, so Barham took the French metrical conte and adapted it to English in such a way as to make it as much at home as if born of the soil.

Most readers will remember the French poet Gresset's story of the parrot "Vert-Vert," that wonderful bird, which, brought up in a convent

among the nuns, became so pious that his fame spread all over France. The sisters, at another convent at a distance wishing to have a visit from Vert-Vert, prevailed on his friends to send him to them. The voyage was made by boat, and on the way down the Seine the sailors taught him so many things that he had never heard in the convent that when he arrived at his destination he shocked the good sisters by the language he used. In holy horror they sent the monster back, but he was made to do such penance that he quite recovered his piety, and when he died was duly canonized.

Barham has an adaptation of this story under the title of "The Jackdaw of Rheims." He was the favorite pet of the cardinal and was noted for his devotional habits and general piety, so much so that he was held up as an example for the priests and monks of the palace.

One day, overcome by a fit of original sin, the jackdaw stole the cardinal's ring and hid it. Then followed a commotion. Everybody was searched, monks, friars, and priests, the jackdaw looking gravely on, but no ring was found. Then follows the cardinal's curse :

The cardinal rose, with a dignified look,
He called for his candle, his bell, and his book,

In holy anger and pious grief
He solemnly cursed that rascally thief!
He cursed him at board, he cursed him in bed,
From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.
He cursed him in sleeping, that every night
He should dream of the devil and wake in a fright.
He cursed him in eating, he cursed him in drinking,
He cursed him in coughing, in sneezing, and winking;
He cursed him in sitting, in standing, in lying;
He cursed him in walking, in riding, in flying;
He cursed him living, he cursed him dying!
Never was heard such a terrible curse.
But what gave rise
To no little surprise,
Nobody seemed one penny the worse!

But the poor little jackdaw pined away until

His eye so dim,
So wasted each limb
That heedless of grammar they all cried, That's him!

Then he led them to his nest, and sure enough there was the ring.

Then the great Lord Cardinal called for his book,
And off that terrible curse he took;
The mute expression
Served in lieu of confession.
And being thus coupled with full restitution,
The Jackdaw got plenary absolution.

Another story, "The Knight and the Lady," is even better. It relates how "Sir Thomas the

Good was a man of a very contemplative mood, and would pose by the hour o'er a weed or a flower." The Lady Jane, however, would not accompany Sir Thomas on the excursions, being much younger than her spouse, remaining at home engaged in

Propounding receipts for some delicate fare,
Some toothsome conserve of quince, apple, or pear,
Or distilling strong waters, or potting a hare,
Or counting her spoons and her crockeryware.
Nay, more ; don't suppose
With such doings as those
This account of her merits must come to a close ;
No ; examine her conduct more closely—you'll find
She by no means neglected improving her mind ;
For there, all the while, with air quite bewitching,
She sat herring-boning, tambouring, and stitching,
Or having an eye to affairs in the kitchen.
Close by her side
Sat her kinsman, McBride,
Her cousin, fourteen times removed, as you'll see
If you look at the Ingoldsby family tree,
When among the collateral branches appears
Captain Dugald MacBride, Royal Scots Fusileers,
And I doubt if you'd find in the whole of his clan
A more high intelligent, worthy young man ;
And there he'd be sitting,
While she was a-knitting,
Or hemming, or stitching, or darning, or fitting,
Or putting a "gore," or a "gusset," or "bit" in ;
Reading aloud, with a very grave look,
Some very wise law from some very good book ;

Some such pious divine as
St. Thomas Aquinas;
Or, equally charming,
The works of Bellarmine,
Or else he unravels
The voyages and travels
Of Hacklutz (how sadly these Dutch names do sully verse),
Purchas', Hawksworth's, or Lemuel Gulliver's—
Not to name others, 'mongst whom there are few so
Admired as John Bunyan or Robinson Crusoe.
No matter who came,
It was always the same,
The captain was reading aloud to the dame,
Till, from having gone through half the books on the shelf,
She was almost as wise as Sir Thomas himself.

Sir Thomas disappears, and after a great search is found in a pond, into which he had tumbled while in search of botanical specimens. His pockets are full of eels, which prove so delicious that the Lady Jane suggests that "the body" should be "set again" to catch more.

Barham lived on terms of social intimacy with the other famous wits of his time, Theodore Hook, Tom Moore, and Sydney Smith, and with the latter in particular was quite intimate. Many are the anecdotes concerning them that still survive.

LORD MACAULAY.

(1800–1859.)

"I wish," said Lord Melbourne once, "I was as cocksure of anything as Macaulay is of everything." Certain it is that wonderful memory held at instant command the treasures of a vast and varied reading, and among Englishmen since the days of Johnson and Burke no man was so well equipped for conversation as Macaulay. And not for conversation only but for writing also, as his essays and history show. It has been the fashion among critics for the past quarter of a century to depreciate Macaulay, to ridicule his style and challenge his accuracy. Leslie Stephen smiles at his "snip-snap style," John Morley deplores its influence on modern writers, and Abraham Hayward made several successful burlesques of it. Macaulay himself in an entry in his diary says of his style: "I think my manner a very good manner, but it comes near to being a very bad one, and those faults in me which are the most

noticeable are those that are the most easily imitated." So his historical accuracy has been questioned by many writers of ability and doubtless there are blots in his history. He was not just to William Penn and he too much magnified his hero, William of Orange, but after all his account of the Revolution of 1688, the causes leading thereto and the results therefrom will remain as the only true account of that eventful period in English history.

And as for his style, it was his style and not that of any one else. The most successful imitators of it are Froude and McMaster, and they sometimes seem the true Amphytrions, because they come very near to having the same mental and literary equipment that Macaulay had.

For the excellence of Macaulay's style lies not so much in the crisp sentences, in the striking antitheses and the extreme lucidity, as in the wonderful fulness of allusion and suggestion. It is not the form in which the thought is expressed, admirable as that is, that strikes us, but the matter therein contained. Thackeray, himself a master of style, expresses his opinion of it in the "Round-about Papers":

> Take at hazard any three pages of the essays or history, and, glimmering below the stream of the narrative, as it were,

you, an average reader, see one, two, three, a half score of allusions to other historic facts, characters, literature, poetry, with which you are acquainted. Why is this epithet used? Whence is that simile drawn? How does he manage, in two or three words, to paint an individual, or to indicate a landscape? Your neighbor, who has his reading, and his little stock of literature stowed away in his mind, shall detect more points, allusions, happy touches, indicating not only the prodigious memory and vast learning of this master, but the wonderful industry, the honest, humble previous toil of this great scholar. He reads twenty books to write a sentence; he travels a hundred miles to make a line of description.

Macaulay did not introduce a new kind of writing, but he greatly improved on his models. The essay-reviews of the *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly* had been familiar to the English public for a quarter of a century. Jeffrey, Sidney Smith, Brougham, Sir Walter Scott, Lockhart, Hazlitt, Southey and Professor Wilson had already won great popular favor as critics and reviewers. But some of them had also earned a right to repose, or had gained other honors to which their writings had been stepping-stones. Jeffrey was longing to lay down the burden of the "Blue and Yellow," and was looking about him for young blood with which to rejuvenate the growing decrepitude of the once all powerful *Review*. "Can you not," he wrote to a friend in London, "find me some bright young men who will become

contributors to the *Review*?" One such young man was found, and in August, 1825, there appeared the famous essay on Milton. The author had not quite attained his twenty-fifth year. One cannot read that essay now without some wonder that it should bring its author such instantaneous and wide renown, for in literary history there is nothing like it, except the publication of "Childe Harold." But there were a number of conspiring causes—fortuitous almost—that helped Macaulay. His brilliant university career and his remarkable conversational powers contributed greatly to make him conspicuous in a society always hungering and thirsting for some new sensation. And so he became a lion in London drawing-rooms and his breakfast table was covered every morning with more invitations than he could accept. Needless to say the fortunes of the *Review* were rehabilitated and for twenty years thereafter its quarterly circulation was large or small as it contained or did not contain an article by Macaulay.

His career is too familiar to be repeated here. The story of his success in parliament, of his brilliant oratory, of his work in India and of his history is more than a twice-told tale. Those who desire to know it fully and wish to read a

book as interesting as a novel should seek out Trevelyan's life of Macaulay. It is the third best biography in the language, being only surpassed by Boswell's Johnson and Lockhart's Scott. No one can read that life without feeling that, fortunate as it appeared to be, his success was won by high merit and by always being fully ready for every emergency, It was no mere luck, no happening of blind chance that brought him fortune and honor and fame. It was his steadfastness, his love of justice and truth and his ardor for the right as he perceived it. Doubtless his horizon was not equally wide in all directions. His mind had many limitations, and he necessarily fell into error, but there are few works of a similar character, controversial and critical, that contain less error than his. He is often an advocate, but his argument has amazing solidity and the witnesses he produces can rarely be impeached. He possessed in a high degree that talent which is essential to successful oratory, the talent of demonstration. For this reason he is a model for all forensic orators.

But he is more than an advocate. He is an able and powerful judge. His judgments upon the men who have come before him for review, of Johnson and Boswell, of Lord Clive and Warren

Hastings, of Sir William Temple and Joseph Addison, of Lord Chatham and John Hampden and an innumerable host of others, are all masterly. Even where they seem to be not entirely just or where they are opposed to the common tradition they are very nearly unanswerable. The two that have given rise to the strongest dissent and have occasioned the most controversy are those concerning Boswell and Johnson. And yet there is not a statement concerning Boswell that cannot be substantiated from his own book, nor a stricture on Johnson that cannot be abundantly proved. This is not saying that Macaulay's estimate of these men is final, but that whoever would overthrow it must come very thoroughly prepared for the encounter.

Macaulay has given to literature a gallery of portraits unequaled anywhere, and it is this that makes his essays so fascinating. He causes to pass before us the heroic men of the past; he portrays their virtues and their vices; he describes their actions, and stops to consider whether they are just or not, commenting upon them both as legist and moralist, and yet not forgetting the environment of the individual. He illustrates his arguments by figures and similes, by wise saws and satiric thrusts drawn from every source in his-

tory, poetry and fiction. He pours over all a wealth of information drawn from all ages and countries. His knowledge seems to be at instantaneous command and illumines all that he says. His essays are a library in themselves.

Though he played no mean part as orator, politician and statesman, Macaulay was essentially a man of letters. The affection that most men lavish upon the mistress of their hearts he lavished on books, and as men in love idealize all women so he thought no book mean. It is astounding to read of the immense amount of trash he had stored in his memory. He did not love mathematics or science, and he had no sympathy with the philosophic speculations of the German and French schools. He consequently was no admirer of Carlyle, nor of John Stuart Mill, nor of Lewis. But everything that was literature, ancient or modern, he enjoyed to the full. He could cry over Homer, and repeat passages without stop from every great book that was ever written. In his capacious brain was stored all manner of strange and curious lore, the spoil of all the ages, and this he would produce at call. He never went anywhere unaccompanied by a book. He lived for literature, and of all men that the world has yet made account of in that vocation, his life seems to have

been the happiest. He did not write as a professional author, but yet no author has ever had so great a remuneration. The check for twenty-thousand pounds that he received from the Longmans on account of sales of his history is one of the wonders of the nineteenth century.

He lies buried in Westminster Abbey, that "great temple of reconciliation" he loved so well to describe, and of all the eminent Englishmen with whose dust his own now mingles there are few greater than he.

"MOCK PEARLS OF BIOGRAPHY."

APOCRYPHAL STORY OF LORD MACAULAY.

ABRAHAM HAYWARD, in his essay on "The Pearls and Mock Pearls of History," speaks of the persistence of anecdotes and stories about great men that continue to be repeated over and over again, though their improbability or falsity has often been exposed. These he calls "mock pearls."

A "mock pearl" of this sort came under my notice a few years ago for the first time concerning Lord Macaulay, that seemed so improbable that I took some pains to inquire into it.

This story has again appeared in an article written by Rev. T. H. S. Escott, a well-known London writer, published in a recent number of *Chambers's Journal.*

The article describes some of the old inns in and around London and among others the

"Star and Garter" at Richmond, celebrated for its whitebait, and goes on to say :

In that same apartment some six-and-forty years earlier had dined, without any companion, another gentleman of unimpressive and plebeian appearance, also on the eve of his departure for the East. Sitting over his solitary glass of claret, this gentleman amused himself by piling the wine glasses and decanters within his reach one upon another till he had reared a crystal pyramid of some height, and he was crowning the structure with some other article when suddenly the crash came and the guest found himself surrounded by a litter of glass splinters. The customer sighed ; the waiter, evidently familiar with the proceeding, brought the bill without the slightest sign of surprise, quietly as if the crash of glass were not a bit more out of the common than the ringing of the bell. Nor, indeed, was it. It was the little custom of a great man after dinner—the common-looking gentleman who took his pleasure thus oddly. He happened to be Thomas Babington, Lord Macaulay. In 1834 he had just been appointed legal adviser to the Supreme Council of India, and he was then preparing to bid a long adieu to whitebait.

This story is sometimes given under one date and sometimes under another. Here is another form of it :

The pleasant coffee-room of the old "Star and Garter" at Richmond—which was burned down in 1869—was patronized by statesmen, politicians, and writers, On Saturday evenings it was regularly visited by a middle-aged gentleman of rather broad stature, with gray hair and a large shirt collar, which formed a conspicuous feature in his attire. He would dine

always alone at a particular corner table, and after dinner it was his humor to build up before him a pyramid of tumblers and wine-glasses, which he topped with a decanter. Occasionally the whole structure would topple over and litter the table with its ruins. Then the middle-aged gentleman would rise, pay his bill, including the charge for broken glass, and depart. The waiters knew him well—he was Thomas Babington, Lord Macaulay!

This grotesque anecdote seemed to me so absurd and so utterly out of keeping with Macaulay's character that several years ago I inclosed the story in a letter to Sir George Otto Trevelyan, Macaulay's nephew and biographer, and asked him what foundation, if any, there was for it.

Under date of February 10, 1899, I received the following answer:

The alleged anecdote about Macaulay is, as you suppose, an absurdity. He was very normal in all his personal habits and quite free from eccentricity. He appears to have heard of the paragraph at the time, though not to have seen it, for there is an entry to this effect in his diary. I quote from recollection, for I have not the diary by me: "There is a story going the rounds of the newspapers about my having knocked over a decanter in a coffee-room and not having seemed disconcerted by it. I do not recollect the circumstance, but if it had occurred I do not think that I should have lost my self-possession."

I remain yours truly,

G. O. TREVELYAN.

JOHN N. CRAWFORD.

I have not published this note before, for I hardly expected to see this "mock pearl" bob up again, but inasmuch as it has been set going, with a responsible indorser, I will send the note after it, knowing full well, however, that the truth can never overtake a well-told lie.

The period of the first form of the story is on the eve of Macaulay's departure for India, and he is described as of "unimpressive and plebeian appearance." This was in 1834, when he was in his thirty-fourth year.

In the second he is "a middle-aged gentleman of rather broad stature, with gray hair and a large shirt collar." This, of course, must have been after his return from India.

Both stories speak of him as "Thomas Babington, Lord Macaulay," which is also absurd, for that was not the style of his title. He was Baron or Lord Macaulay of Rothley. He was not made a peer until August, 1857, long after he had ceased to visit the "Star and Garter," if, indeed, he had ever been in the habit of going there at all.

The whole thing, including the descriptions of his personal appearance, is as absurd and ridiculous as can well be imagined. No person that knows anything whatever of Lord Macaulay

or has ever looked upon his portrait, can conceive of a "plebeian appearance" in that massive head and those powerful though rugged features.

There is one amusing episode in Macaulay's career, however, related in Trevelyan's life that I have often wondered has not been made more of, and that is the duel he came near having with William Wallace.

The latter was a London barrister who edited an edition of the works of Sir James Mackintosh, and the readers of Macaulay's essays will remember the unsparing castigation Mr. Wallace received for the manner in which he performed that task.

It was written by Macaulay when he was in India, and made Mr. Wallace fighting mad. He tried in vain to obtain "the satisfaction customary among gentlemen" from Macvey Napier, the editor of the *Review*, but that wily Scot had no notion of standing up to be shot at, as his predecessor, Jeffrey, had once been willing to do, so Wallace nursed his wrath until Macaulay returned to England, three years later.

One of the first things to meet Macaulay's astonished gaze was a challenge from Wallace, which he at once confided to Lord Strafford, a warm personal friend, and a thorough man of the

world. Fortunately Mr. Wallace's second was also a man of good sense. The idea of permitting two such men as Macaulay and Wallace to go out and shoot at each other with blundering pistols all on account of a few sharp sentences in a *Review* must have struck these gentlemen as the height of folly. They at once hit upon Touchstone's expedient of an "If"—that great composer of quarrels. It was proposed that Mr. Wallace should make a preliminary declaration that he meant by his memoir nothing disrespectful or unkind to Mackintosh, and then Macaulay was to express his regret that he had used language in his article that could be deemed personally offensive. In this way the affair was settled.

The idea of Macaulay's fighting a duel is certainly very funny. He is described in his biography as having been one of the unhandiest of boys and men, disinclined to all kinds of outdoor sports. He could neither shoot nor drive nor skate nor row nor swim. He never rode on horseback. He could no more have shot off a pistol than he could have jumped the Thames, and if he had attempted it on the dueling ground one of the seconds would have been in far greater peril than his opponent. And yet so strong were the dueling customs of the day that he fully intended

to accept the challenge. In a letter to Napier he said, "I had, to tell you the truth, no notion that a meeting could be avoided."

Your "If" is a great peacemaker. There is much virtue in "if."

BENJAMIN DISRAELI,

EARL OF BEACONSFIELD.

(1804–1881.)

DISRAELI'S career was scarcely less marvelous than that of Napoleon. The poverty-oppressed Corsican's rise to the Empire of France and the domination of Europe was fairly parelleled by the slower, yet certain, ascent of the Christian Jew from a humble station in middle life to be the ruler of an empire on which the sun never sets. And this he accomplished by the sheer force of will and intellectual power, aided by an oratorical gift that made him the spokesman of a party.

His rank as a statesman may still be in dispute, but no one questions his superb and brilliant qualities as a party leader and orator in the House of Commons, and his mastery over that body. When he died no tribute of praise was more eloquent or more just than that pronounced by Mr. Gladstone. And what he singled out for par-

ticular encomium was Disraeli's courage as a leader of party, and his pride in and faithfulness to his own race.

But he was not only a Jew; he was a great Englishman who extended and enlarged the empire of the Queen, ever ready to maintain its honor and integrity against all Europe. In none of her prime ministers had Queen Victoria such faith and trust, during her long reign under so many administrations, as in the Earl of Beaconsfield.

He achieved his first successes in life as a novelist, and "Vivian Grey" and the "Young Duke" gave him the entrée of London society. Here with D'Orsay, Bulwer and the young aristocracy he posed as a dandy of the dandies, and outshone them all in peculiarities of dress and manner. "Vivian Grey" was the prophecy of his own career, and he meant it to be. From his boyhood he had his eyes on parliament, and made several attempts to gain an election before he succeeded. Five years before he entered parliament, when he was known only as a youthful novelist and a society butterfly, Lord Melbourne asked him one evening what he wanted to be. "Prime minister of England," replied the audacious youth, much to the amusement of the peer,

who himself reached that station only a few months prior to the time when Disraeli was first elected to parliament in 1837.

He entered the House of Commons with the accession of Victoria, and lived to confer upon his Sovereign the title of Empress of India. He published his first novel, " Vivian Grey " at twenty-one with his eyes fixed longingly on parliament as the predestined theater of his fame. He published his last novel, " Endymion," at seventy-six when he had attained the fulness of his aspirations. He had drank deeply of the bitterness of successive defeats, he had seen and known human nature in all its varying aspects from petty meanness to self-denying generosity and was at last crowned with the victor's laurels in the race of life.

THOMAS CARLYLE.

(1795–1881.)

If I were asked what writer of the nineteenth century had made the greatest impress on his time, I think I would say Thomas Carlyle. I am aware that there are others who have influenced in a high degree the thought and expression of modern life. There are Macaulay and Thackeray and Dickens and Tennyson. There are others in less degree that everybody can call to mind, who are entitled to a high place in literature. There are the early poets, like Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley and Keats. There are the critics like Coleridge and Hazlitt. But above and beyond them all, towering like one of his own Scottish crags, stands Carlyle, rugged and beetle-browed, although with many unpleasant and misty phenomena about him. He stands there, unscalable and unknowable on one side, and yet on the other, the merest prey to gossip and to fortune. Carlyle the genius, appears to

have been one person; Carlyle the man, quite another.

It is not a pleasant thing to have our idols smashed, but that is what happened to many an American when Froude published the "Reminiscences and Letters of Carlyle." We stood aghast, for we had been brought up to the idea that preaching and practice went hand in hand. We believed that when a prophet arrived who taught not only the "Everlasting yea and nay"—the absolute truthfulness of life—but also the virtues of self-sacrifice and duty, that we might find in him an exemplar of all these things. What then was our surprise to know that so far from being a private saint, he was above all others one of the most querulous, unhappy and discontented souls that was ever suffered to inhabit a tenement of clay. He could speak no good of any one. His recorded utterances have nothing but contempt for Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Balzac, Hugo, Lamb, Jeffrey, Macaulay, John Stuart Mill and Mazzini. To many of these men he was under great obligations, but that was of no significance. Never was there a man born in the world with so strange a conscience. His egotism was so great that he believed that the thing he could not or would not do was not worth doing, and that those

who differed with him were little better than a pack of fools. Mr. Froude in his biography of him is compelled to say, "Of all men I have ever seen, Carlyle was the least patient of the common woes of humanity." And to show the obverse of his character in respect to minor ills Mrs. Carlyle once wrote "A positive Christian in bearing others' pain, he is himself a roaring Thor when himself is pricked by a pin."

These, and a thousand other things that may be laid to his personal account must be steadily and religiously ignored by those who would really know Carlyle in his works.

These may be read with endless delight. Doubtless we must get accustomed to the style—in every enterprise we must understand the tools that are to be worked with. But when we understand the language in which he speaks—it is sometimes called Carlylese—we gain immense enjoyment. The "French Revolution" is the finest and most dramatic story that has been told in modern times. It is not a narrative, but a picture, a panorama. The artist stands at one side and unrolls before us that tremendous story of passion and vengeance, when gods and demons contended, and when faith found its avenger in the "olive complexioned" Corsican. From the fearful

chapter where "Louis the well-beloved," lies dying, "unhousell'd, disappointed, unaneled," down to the "whiff of grape-shot," every page is livid, every character described is alive and bleeding. In all English literature there is no such book.

The "Cromwell," too, is masterly. That strange hero, half hypocrite, half saint, is so described by documents and records, bound together by the merest ligament of comment in a way that is unforgettable in English speech. And it is, too, most artistically done. Think what we may, Carlyle's "Cromwell" is the last and most authentic story of the man.

"Frederick the Great" is his masterpiece, the most decidedly complete combination of history and biography yet delivered to man in the English tongue.

In that great book you may see the famous Prussian King as the one genuine figure in the European history of the eighteenth century. It is a marvelous portraiture, and even at a single reading one may carry in his mind its pictures forever. If you would understand eighteenth century politics and war, read Carlyle's Frederick the Great.

We Americans have a very fair right to talk of Carlyle and praise him. It was we who discovered him. He was without honor in Britain

when in the early "thirties" Emerson brought "Sartor Resartus" to the knowledge of his countrymen. Carlyle had carried the manuscript to almost every London publisher meeting with nothing but defeat. No one would have it. Finally he got the editor of *Fraser's Magazine* to publish it in numbers and even then met with ridicule only. "Stop that stuff or stop my paper," wrote one of the subscribers. Carlyle himself said at that time that in the whole world there were but two persons who found anything in it worth reading. One was Emerson and the other a priest at Cork.

It was published in Boston about 1834, and with Emerson's introduction was received with enthusiasm. It became the literary fashion and it was widely read. Before Carlyle ever received an English penny for his work, Emerson sent him from this country, something like four hundred dollars.

"Sartor Resartus" is a prose poem on life, manners, religion, politics and literature. It is the one work of Carlyle's that has exerted more influence on modern thought than any other. It is from this that he gained his disciples and interpreters.

JOHN STUART MILL.

(1806-1873).

THE name of John Stuart Mill is not often heard in these days, though he has been dead barely thirty years. Fifty years ago he was one of the foremost men in England and his works were widely read. To-day there are few, if any, readers who open his pages. His "Logic," his "Dissertations on Philosophy," and his essays on "Liberty," "The Subjection of Women," and "Representative Government" are no longer read. The only volume of his that the world has any interest in is his "Autobiography," published shortly after his death. It does not quite rank with the great autobiographies—with those of Cellini, Rousseau, Franklin, and Gibbon, for it does not contain the self-revelations that make those remarkable books so deeply interesting to humanity, but Mill describes in very clear and simple style the growth of his mind and the manner of his education. As the story of how a

father educated his son, and the results of that education, it is one of the most interesting books in the world.

His father was James Mill, a Scotchman, educated at the University of Edinburgh and intended for the Church. His skepticism kept him out of the pulpit and he became a journalist. Later he entered the service of the East India Company and wrote a history of "British India," a work that Macaulay mentions with respect.

John Stuart the eldest son of James Hill, was born in 1806, and from his infancy his education was planned and entirely conducted by his father. He never went to school. At the age of three he was taught the Greek alphabet, and by the time he was eight he had read more Greek authors than are to be found in the ordinary classical courses in college. The only thing beside Greek that he studied in this period was arithmetic, which he then and ever afterward detested. He was a constant inmate of his father's study, and his companion in walking and all their conversation was on books or reading. Thus he never was a boy and lost much through not being thrown among boys who have a knack at knocking the nonsense out of priggish boys. Of games and plays such as healthy children and youths delight in he knew

nothing, nor did he have any skill in manual labor. He could not even drive a nail. But he says his childhood was not unhappy and that he was a hearty and high-spirited boy.

At eight he began the study of Latin, which he in turn taught to his younger brothers and sisters. This was good training and discipline for his mind, but he thought it not advantageous in other respects. By the time he was twelve he had read all the classics, Latin and Greek, that are studied at the great universities and then took up logic and political economy.

He was taught no religious belief, but the principles of a lofty morality were carefully instilled into him and the ideals of his life were high and noble. At fourteen his education was considered complete and he passed the following year in France, where he was an inmate of the family of Sir Samuel Bentham, a brother of Jeremy Bentham, of whom the elder Mill was a friend and follower.

At sixteen he began to write for the press, and at seventeen became a servant of the East India Company, in whose employment he remained for many years.

Thus the youth entered manhood, destined by his father to be an apostle of reform. He had

the ambition to assume the rôle, but when he came into contact with actual life and with men, and saw how hard it was to make an impression upon them and how almost impossible it was to introduce even the smallest change in established customs and habits, his misgivings overcame him for a time and he passed through a period of great depression. The chapter in the autobiography on this crisis in his mental history is the finest in the volume. It was at this period that he first met with Wordsworth's poems. He says :

> I took up the collection of his poems from curiosity, with no expectation of mental relief from it, though I had before resorted to poetry with that hope. In the worst period of my depression I had read through the whole of Byron (then new to me) to try whether a poet, whose peculiar department was supposed to be that of intense feeling, could rouse any feeling in me. As might be expected, I got no good from this reading, but the reverse. The poet's state of mind was too much like my own. . . . . But while Byron was exactly what did not suit my condition Wordsworth was exactly what did.

He became an ardent Wordsworthian, though not so much so as to admire everything he wrote —for he did not like the " Excursion "—but he speaks repeatedly of the benefit he received from Wordsworth. The acquaintances he made also had an important influence upon him, and he

speaks particularly of the influence of John Sterling and of Carlyle. He finally emerged from his cave of gloom, and in 1830 commenced his political and philosophical writings. From that period until the end of his life he exerted an immense influence on English thought.

When the Carlyles moved to London, in 1834, John Stuart Mill welcomed and soon became on intimate terms with them. In his "Reminiscences" Carlyle thus describes him:

> He had taken a great attachment to me (which lasted about ten years and then suddenly ended, I never knew how), an altogether clear, logical, honest, amicable, affectionate young man, and respected as such here, though sometimes felt to be rather colorless, even aqueous, no religion in any form traceable in him.

And again he says: "His talk is sawdustish, like ale when there is no wine to be had."

As a critic in the *Westminster Review* Mill became very influential. He was among the first to discover the genius of Tennyson, and when the *Quarterly* was ridiculing Tennyson's first volume, the *Westminster* highly praised it.

So, too, of Carlyle. It was Mill's praise of "The French Revolution" which saved that book. Perhaps Mill felt some reponsibility in the matter. It will be remembered that he had

borrowed the history in manuscript, had loaned the first volume to his friend, Mrs. Taylor, and through her carelessness it had been destroyed. It was a terrible blow to all concerned, though Carlyle took it more philosophically than the others. After a course of novels he resolutely sat down and rewrote the volume.

When the book was published Mill pointed out its great beauties and declared that a new and powerful writer had appeared.

In his autobiography Mill speaks of Carlyle's great influence on himself, and acknowledges his debt to him.

In 1865 Mill was elected to the House of Commons, but his parliamentary career was something of a disappointment. He did not possess the oratorical temperament, and while he was listened to with respect he exerted no particular influence. He failed of re-election in 1868.

His remaining years were passed at Avignon, in France. He died in 1873 in his sixty-seventh year, meeting death with the philosophical fortitude that had characterized his life.

His autobiography is a very curious and interesting book.

MR. AND MRS. GEORGE GROTE.

WHOEVER reads the memoirs, diaries, journals and reminiscences in which social life in London between the years 1830 and 1870 is described will constantly meet with the names of Mr. and Mrs. George Grote. They possessed a large circle of friends, embracing everybody in the literary world best worth knowing, and they seem to have been great favorites. He was a learned and amiable gentleman of extremely liberal opinions, and she was a cultivated but extremely eccentric woman. He was gentle and refined—almost feminine in his manner ; she was tall, high-shouldered, uncommonly handsome, but masculine in appearance and brusque even to rudeness in her intercourse with society. She was two years his senior and they were married in 1820, when he was twenty-six and she twenty-eight. They lived to old age, he dying in 1871 at the age of seventy-seven and she in 1878 at the age of eighty-six. After his death she published his

biography under the title of "The Personal Life of George Grote," in which much of their joint lives and work was described. After her death Lady Eastlake published an interesting sketch of her life. In these volumes one can see something of two very remarkable persons, but a much more striking view of them may be seen in Fanny Kemble's "Records," in Mrs. Carlyle's "Letters," in "Greville's Memoirs," in "Rogers' Table Talk," and in the "Life and Letters of Sydney Smith." In other books, too, occasional glimpses may be had, as in the volume of literary essays, "Safe Studies," by Lionel A. Tollemache.

George Grote, author of the monumental "History of Greece," in twelve volumes, which few people read and all admire, was a successful London banker. He was England's "banker-historian," as Rogers was her "banker-poet," and Sir John Lubbock is her "banker-naturalist." From his youth Grote was fond of classical studies, and three years after his marriage his wife inspired him to undertake the history. He began it in 1823, laid it aside during the ten years between 1833 and 1843 that he served in parliament, and finished it in 1855, when he had just completed his sixty-first year. This was the main literary work of his life, though he wrote much else which

commanded wide attention. He early came under the influence of James Mill, that sturdy Scotch reformer and agnostic, and Mrs. Grote has no hesitation in saying that this influence was not altogether helpful to the young banker and student. But he was for years one of the bright and shining lights of the advanced school of religious and political thought in England which was founded by James Mill and had its best expression in John Stuart Mill.

Grote lived on terms of intimacy with the Mills for many years, but Mrs. Grote had not so much toleration for them, and a final rupture came when the Mrs. Taylor episode in John Stuart Mill's career occurred. That platonic attachment—as it really was—was something too much for Mrs. Grote, and she expressed herself accordingly. This kind of criticism was the one thing Stuart Mill would not endure, and Mrs. Grote was too outspoken a woman not to comment on what appeared like a breach of social morals.

Sydney Smith was one of Mrs. Grote's warmest admirers, though he could not forbear indulging his wit at what he called her grotesqueries. One of his witticisms is recorded by Fanny Kemble. "I like them, I like them," he said

to her once, speaking of the Grotes. "I like him, he is so ladylike; and I like her, she is such a perfect gentleman." Volumes could not describe their personality better. At their country home, where they entertained many distinguished guests, Mrs. Grote often appeared with a stick in her hand, a man's hat on her head and a coachman's box coat or drab cloth with many capes over her shoulders, and she stalked about the house and grounds alternately superintending the domestic economy and discussing with her visitors questions of music and art with great knowledge and discrimination.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Grote were passionately fond of music and both played on the violoncello with rare taste and expression. Once when a discussion of Gluck's music engaged the interest of some of her guests Mrs. Grote shouted out to her servant to bring her the big fiddle from the hall. Taking it between her knees she played with great taste and expression several of Gluck's masterpieces.

Mrs. Grote was fond of entertaining artistic and musical notables. When Fannie Ellsler appeared in London Mrs. Grote did much for her and did all she could to make her a respectable person. During Fanny's absence in America

Mrs. Grote took charge of her child and so educated her that she grew up to be a noble woman.

Mendelssohn and Jenny Lind were great favorites with the Grotes and they did much to assist the great Swedish cantatrice when she first appeared in London. Their friendship was lifelong. Mrs. Grote was as ready at repartee as Sydney Smith himself, and she possessed the faculty of describing people in the pithiest way, for she had a vocabulary of her own, often very homely but always forcible. Certain of her lady acquaintances were "good adjectives" to their husbands or "good doormats," and another was a "porcelain woman." She was a fine converser and was also a good listener. She was loath to loan books from their library, but when she did she would exact from the borrower a sovereign as a deposit for the return of the book. Many a book lender has mourned because he did not do some such thing.

Her finest repartee was made to Louis Napoleon. When that prince was a mere adventurer in London he lived for a time on terms of considerable intimacy with the Grotes. When he was President of the French Republic Mrs. Grote happened to be in Paris, but he ignored her.

One day, however, when the Bois de Boulogne was crowded their carriages came so close together that he could not avoid speaking to her. "Ah, madame, vous êtes ici! Restez-vous longtemps à Paris?" "Pas longtemps, monseigneur; et vous?" "Ah, madame, you are here? Do you remain long in Paris?" "Not long, sir; and you?"

The coup d'état shortly followed and Napoleon remained for twenty years.

The poet Rogers, with Fanny Kemble, once visited Mrs. Grote at her country house, which she had recently enlarged by an addition. The external appearance of the house was not improved by it, and Mr. Rogers gave utterance to some characteristic sneers to Fanny. Just then Mrs. Grote appeared and Rogers turned to her with a sardonic smile and said: "I was just remarking that in whatever part of the world I had seen this building I should have guessed to whose taste I might attribute its erection." Without an instant's hesitation she replied: "Ah! 'tis a beastly thing, to be sure! The confounded workmen played the devil with the place while I was away." And then she led the way into the house.

Taken altogether they are a noteworthy couple

and well deserving of remembrance. Mrs. Grote's life of her husband is a remarkably interesting book. It tells much of the literary and social life in England in the Victorian era.

"EOTHEN,"

BY

ALEXANDER WILLIAM KINGLAKE.

"EOTHEN," by Alexander William Kinglake, first appeared in 1844, and its original title was "Eothen, or Traces of Travel Brought Home from the East." In his preface the author expressed the hope that the name "Eothen" would be the only hard word found in the book. It is Greek, signifying "from the early dawn," "from the east." A more delightful book was never written, and, while it is nominally a book of travel, it is rather the record of the impressions of the author than of outward facts. By its style and method it is more like Sterne's "Sentimental Journey," without its coarseness, than any ordinary book of travel. One edition of the volume has an introduction by James Bryce, the well-known author of "The American Commonwealth," who says that Kinglake "is as distinctly in the front rank of authors of his own kind as

Montaigne is in the front rank among essayists, or Boswell among biographers, or Gibbon among historians, or Adam Smith among economists, or Darwin among naturalists."

Certainly no one will take up this splendid and original book to read and lightly lay it down. From the first page to the last it is a fascinating narrative, in a style untrammeled, versatile, and singularly effective. The journey was made in 1834 and 1835, when Kinglake was a young man, but recently out of Cambridge, where he had been the contemporary and friend of Thackeray, Tennyson, and Monckton Milnes. The Turkish boundary had not then been pushed behind the Balkans, but included Bosnia, Servia, and Bulgaria, and the unspeakable Turk was yet a power in eastern Europe. Belgrade on the Danube was an Ottoman fortress, and could still defy "an Austrian army awfully arrayed."

The narrative begins at Semlin, the last frontier town of Hungary, and opens with this striking passage:

> At Semlin I still was encompassed by the scenes and the sounds of familiar life; the din of the busy world still vexed and cheered me; the unveiled faces of women still shone in the light of day. Yet whenever I chose to look southward I saw the Ottoman's fortress—austere, and darkly impending high

over the vale of the Danube—historic Belgrade. I had come, as it were, to the end of this wheel-going Europe, and now my eyes would see the splendor and havoc of the east.

"The splendor and havoc of the east!" This is the object of the journey, and we see it all through Mr. Kinglake's eyes, as the panorama is gradually unrolled before us. Kinglake's college friend, Lord Pollington, the Methley of the book, was his companion, and with their servants they crossed the Save "and there was an end to Christendom for many a day to come." In the streets of Belgrade nothing was familiar—everything was strange.

Again and again you meet turbans and faces of men, but they have nothing for you—no welcome, no wonder, no wrath, no scorn; they look upon you as we do upon a December's fall of snow—as a seasonable unaccountable, uncomfortable work of God, that may have been sent for some good purpose, to be revealed hereafter.

From Belgrade the travelers pushed southward to Constantinople, a journey of fifteen days, not without mild adventures, the worst mishap being that Methley was taken ill. In that plague-ridden country every illness was taken for the plague, and this made it very difficult to obtain assistance —but at last Constantinople was reached, and it

soon turned out that the party were not plague-stricken.

There is a humorous description of an Ottoman lady in the chapter on Constantinople, and a still more graphic account of the manner of buying and selling in the Turkish bazaars, which is the best of comedy. From Constantinople the travelers pass through the Troad and visit the scenes made immortal in the Iliad, and enjoy their Homer together on the site of the ancient Grecian camp. Thence to Smyrna, "Infidel Smyrna," which furnishes a fine chapter. Kinglake calls it "the chief town and capital of that Grecian race against which you will be cautioned so carefully as soon as you touch the Levant." They are a race of superstitious rascals, but the women are beautiful. They have innumerable saints' days, and "as you move through the narrow streets of the city, at these times of festival, the transom-shaped windows suspended over your head on either side are filled with the beautiful descendants of the old Ionian race; all (even yonder empress throned at the window of the humblest mud cottage) are attired with seeming magnificence. Their classic heads are crowned with scarlet and laden with jewels or coins of gold—the whole wealth of their wearers; their features are touched

with a savage pencil, hardening the outlines of eyes and eyebrows, and lending an unnatural fire to the stern, grave looks with which they pierce your brain. Endure their fiery eyes as best you may, and ride on slowly and reverently, for, facing you from the side of the transom that looks longwise through the street, you see one glorious shape, transcendent in its beauty; you see the massive braid of hair as it catches a touch of light on its jetty surface, and the broad, calm, angry brow; the large eyes deeply set and self-relying, as the eyes of a conqueror, with all the rich shadows of thought lying darkly around them; you see the thin, fiery nostril, and the bold line of the chin and throat, disclosing all the fierceness and all the pride, passion, and power that can live along with the rare womanly beauty of those sweetly turned lips. But then, there is a terrible stillness in this breathing image; it seems like the stillness of a savage that sits intent and brooding day by day upon some fearful scheme of vengeance; and yet more like it seems the stillness of an immortal, whose will must be known and obeyed without sign or speech. Bow down! bow down, and adore the young Persephone, transcendent Queen of Shades.

On his way to Jerusalem and the Holy Land Kinglake visited "on the grassy slopes of Leb-

anon," the eccentric Lady Hester Stanhope, sister of William Pitt, who after the death of the great statesman made her home there until her death, a period of thirty years. The chapter describing her manner of life and her conversation is remarkably interesting. He crossed the plains of Esdraelon and entered among the hills of Galilee, and there in the great Catholic church is the sanctuary—the dwelling of the Blessed Virgin. Whether it be the true sanctuary or not the scene is necessarily impressive, and in its description we have one of the most poetic chapters in the book.

From Nazareth, under the guidance of a young Nazarene, he took the road to the Sea of Galilee.

> I passed by Cana and the house of the marriage feast prolonged by miraculous wine. I came to the field in which our Saviour had rebuked the Scotch Sabbath-keepers of that period by suffering his disciples to pluck corn on the Lord's day. I rode over the ground where the fainting multitude had been fed, and they showed me some massive fragments—the relics, they said, of that wondrous banquet now turned into stone. The petrification was most complete.

He describes the Sea of Galilee, the river Jordan, and bathes in the Dead Sea. The country around is inhabited by the Arabs, not always the most comfortable of neighbors, but the most courteous of hosts.

From Jerusalem and from Palestine the travels are continued across the desert to Cairo, to the Pyramids, to the Sphinx, and to Suez. Thence to Damascus and back again to the Mediterranean shores. Everywhere the traveler leads there is vast abundance of entertainment served in the happiest and most felicitous style. It is the poetry of travel.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

(1809–1861.)

THE republication of Mrs. Browning's "Aurora Leigh," with an introduction by Mr. Swinburne, in which he says there is not "a dull line" in the whole poem, has stirred up quite a controversy in certain literary quarters, not only over the accuracy of Mr. Swinburne's statement, but as to the merits of the poem itself. No one can deny that it abounds in many beautiful and noble passages; but when it comes to asserting that a long novel in blank verse contains no dull lines it is asking something too much.

Mrs. Browning does not appear at her best in her long poems, their blemishes being more fatiguing than their beauties are inspiring. "Aurora Leigh" is pedantic, its meter sometimes halting, and while as a story it will hold the reader's attention throughout, so it would had it been

written in prose. The theme is "sociological," and chiefly concerns three women and one man. But the moral, or whatever it may be called, of the story is utterly unnatural and impossible. Mrs. Browning came but little in contact with the world of actuality because of long years of delicate health, and she knew men and women only in imagination or from books. The characters, therefore, she portrayed are not lifelike or real. For this reason her longer poems, and "Aurora Leigh" particularly, will scarcely survive the generation for which they were written.

But her short poems will cause her to be long remembered as England's chief poetess. Like all writers who have written much she is unequal and sometimes weak and faulty, but her best work is exquisitely beautiful. Her life was sad in many of its outward aspects, and she endured much physical suffering, so that it is not strange she should have dwelt more in the house of mourning than in the house of mirth. A vein of sadness runs through the greater part of her poetry, but it is a sadness tempered by exquisite sweetness. One of her best-known poems, "Cowper's Grave," illustrates these characteristics, and few can read it without tears. The second stanza runs:

O poets, from a maniac's tongue was poured the deathless
singing !
O Christians, at your cross of hope, a hopeless hand was
clinging !
O men, this man in brotherhood your weary paths be-
guiling,
Groaned inly while he taught you peace, and died while ye
were smiling !

"The Cry of the Children" is another of her great lyrics, breathing a love of humanity that stirred the hearts of men as profoundly as did Hood's "Song of the Shirt." It was the cry of the children of the mines:

Do you hear the children weeping, O my brothers,
Ere the sorrow comes with years ?
They are leaning their young heads against their mothers,
And that cannot stop their tears.
The young lambs are bleating in the meadows ;
The young birds are chirping in their nest ;
The young fawns are playing with the shadows ;
The young flowers are blowing towards the west ;
But the young, young children, O my brothers,
They are weeping bitterly !
They are weeping in the playtime of the others,
In the country of the free.

The whole poem gleams with pathos and beauty and exalted feeling. Other favorites of these poems not easily to be forgotten when once read are "Isobel's Child," "The Duchess May,"

"Bertha in the Lane," "Romance of the Swan's Nest," "Hector in the Garden" and "To Flush, My Dog."

Elizabeth Barrett was singularly precocious, and when a mere child began to write. She read Greek at eight, and when she was nine, as she relates in her poem "Hector in the Garden," it suggested to her that the Greeks were nine years in besieging Troy.

> Nine years old! The first of any
> Seem the happiest years that come;
> Yet when I was nine, I said
> No such word! I thought instead
> That the Greeks had used as many
> In besieging Ilium.

Many of her poems show that she had a fine classical education. One of her childish efforts was an epic on the battle of Marathon, after the style of Pope's Homer, and from that time forward she cultivated the art of poesy. She published a volume of poems when nineteen, which was well received by the English critics. Her principal volume of poems was published in 1846, the year she married Robert Browning, when she was in her fortieth year. The readers of Poe's criticisms will remember the high praise he bestowed on Elizabeth Barrett for that volume of poems. He

was one of the first of critics to justly appreciate her genius. After her marriage her life was spent at Florence, where she wrote her two long poems, "Casa Guidi Windows" and "Aurora Leigh." She died in 1861 in her fifty-fifth year.

Her popularity long preceded that of her husband, if, indeed, it can be said that Browning ever became a popular poet at all. Her name was known where his was not, and there have been wide circles of readers who were acquainted with her poetry but not with his. Her place on Mount Parnassus is but little below that of Tennyson and Robert Browning.

LOVE LETTERS OF TWO POETS.

No one can gainsay that letters are often—perhaps always—the most authentic part of biography and history. They are "human documents" written on the spot and amid surroundings that time nor fraud can thereafter change. This is what makes the value of Walpole's letters, of Cowper's, of Lamb's, of Franklin's and Washington's and Jefferson's, and this is why "The Letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett," are of such exceeding great interest to-day. The son, Robert Barrett Browning, has been somewhat criticised for thus giving to the gaze of the world the sacred utterances of his father and mother delivered in the privacy of courtship, but we can see no fault in him. A more ideal courtship, a more beautiful love story, was never imagined by poet or novelist, and it is perfectly fitting that it should be known to those who have so long admired and loved these two poets. When this correspondence commenced in January, 1845, Miss Barrett was much the better known poet of the two. One

cannot say she was popular in the sense that everyone read her poetry, but she had a high place in the public esteem—which Browning had not. His first poem, "Pauline," had fallen stillborn from the press, and his second, "Paracelsus," had not met with much better fortune. People complained then, as since, that they could not understand him, and he seemed to take but little pains to make his enigmas plainer.

At this time Miss Barrett was approaching her fortieth year, and for twenty-five years had been an invalid unable to walk. When she was fifteen she had been thrown from a pony, the fall injuring her spine. The two poets had never met. The correspondence commenced January 10, 1845, with a letter from Browning in praise of a volume of poems by Miss Barrett then just published.

I love your verses with all my heart, dear Miss Barrett—and this is no offhand, complimentary letter I shall write—whatever else, no prompt matter-of-course recognition of your genius, and there a graceful and natural end of the thing. Since the day last week when I first read your poems, I quite laugh to remember how I have been turning and turning again in my mind what I should be able to tell you of their effect upon me, for in the first flush of delight I thought I would this once get out of my habit of purely passive enjoyment, when I do really enjoy, and thoroughly justify my admiration —perhaps even as a loyal fellow craftsman should,

try and find fault and do you some little good hereafter !—but nothing comes of it all—so into me has it gone, and part of me has it become, this great living poetry of yours, not a flower of which but took root and grew.

In this strain of praise he continues and then goes on to say how near he once was to seeing her and becoming acquainted.

She replied in a letter of gratitude for this pleasing praise, and says :

"Sympathy is dear, very dear to me ; but the sympathy of a poet, and such a poet, is the quintessence of sympathy to me ! Will you take back my gratitude for it ? Agreeing, too, that of all the commerce done in the world, from Tyre to Carthage, the exchange of sympathy for gratitude is the most princely thing !

And thus the love match began. From gratitude and sympathy they passed to friendship, and from friendship to love. It was not until the following May that they met. Soon came Browning's declaration of love, and this at first Miss Barrett would not hear—first out of filial piety, and second on the score of her own health, which she thought would only be a burden to a husband. Miss Barrett had a most extraordinary father, who was a self-willed, intolerant and narrow-minded man. He had a large family, eleven sons and daughters, and he would not consent to

the marriage of any of them. On pain of his displeasure he forbade them to marry. That being the Barrettian decree, Miss Barrett refused to hear Mr. Browning at first because she knew she could not obtain her father's consent, and to marry without it seemed little less than the unpardonable sin. But the wooing of a lover becomes sometimes stronger than parental authority, and by September Browning had so far won her consent that if her health improved she would agree to an engagement. Her health did improve, and by and by they were betrothed. Still there remained the obdurate father in the way. Finally his consent being impossible to obtain—it was not even asked, so well was his nature known—the lovers agreed to an elopement, which was successfully carried out in September, 1846, and they fled to Italy. The father never forgave them. It is a most delightful love story, and the letters relate it, but they contain much else. The writers do not confine themselves to their own feelings, but write about and criticise each other's poems, in which Miss Barrett wonderfully improves some of the blinder passages in what Browning is writing. He was then writing "Bells and Pomegranates" "Why bells and pomegranates?" said she. "Symbolical," he replied, "of

pleasure and profit, the gay and the grave, the poetry and the prose, singing and sermonizing."

We have also glimpses of Carlyle, brief criticisms of Tennyson and Dickens and appreciations of Thackeray, as well as some references to Edgar A. Poe, one of the first of critics to recognize Miss Barrett's genius.

In one of her letters Miss Barrett gives an exquisite autobiographical sketch of her childhood and early reading. After describing her studies and her disposition to versify, she goes on :

As to the gods and goddesses, I believed in them all quite seriously and reconciled them to Christianity, which I believed in, too, after a fashion, as some greater philosophers have done—and went out one day with my pinafore full of little sticks (and a match from the housemaid's cupboard) to sacrifice to blue-eyed Minerva, who was my favorite goddess, on the whole, because she cared for Athens. As soon as I began to doubt about my goddesses I fell into a vague sort of general skepticism, and, though I went on saying the Lord's prayer at nights and mornings, and the "Bless all my kind friends" afterward by the childish custom, yet I ended this liturgy with a supplication which I found in "King's Memoirs' and which took my fancy and met my general views exactly : "O God, if there be a God, save my soul, if I have a soul." Perhaps the theology of many thoughtful children is scarcely more orthodox than this ; but indeed it is wonderful to myself sometimes how I came to escape, on the whole, as well as I have done. . . . Papa used to say : "Don't read Gibbon's History—it's not a proper book. Don't read 'Tom

Jones' and none of the books on this side, mind." So I was very obedient and never touched the books on that side, and only read instead Tom Paine's "Age of Reason" and Voltaire's "Philosophical Dictionary" and Hume's "Essays" and 'Werther" and Rousseau and Mary Wollstonecraft, books which I was never suspected of looking toward and which were not on "that side" certainly, but which did as well.

One could quote from these delightful letters without end. They form an authentic part of the lives of the Brownings that every lover of their poetry should read.

RICHARD HENGIST HORNE.

(1803–1884.)

In reading the published letters of the Brownings one frequently comes across the name of Richard Henry Horne, who was their friend and correspondent and most highly esteemed by both. He was also a poet, and, if one chooses to inquire, he was among the greatest of the Victorian poets. Yet he is now quite obscure, unknown possibly to thousands with whom the names of the Brownings and Tennyson are household words. He was not only a poet, but remarkable in other ways, having led an adventurous life in many parts of the world, being notable for his feats of strength. He was a daring swimmer. Could bend a poker by striking it against his forearm, and danced and played and sung up to his eightieth year. He fought for Mexican independence in 1820 as a midshipman in the Mexican Navy, and took part in the capture of Vera Cruz. After the war

he traveled northward through the United States, or rather the Western territories, and had many adventures among the Indians. In going through Canada he stopped at Niagara Falls, where he performed some foolhardy exploits that resulted in his breaking two of his ribs. He was shipwrecked in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and on his voyage home to England on a merchant ship the crew mutinied and fired the ship in mid-ocean. He finally reached London, and in 1833, when he was in his thirtieth year, commenced his literary career. He became the friend and companion of literary men—Leigh Hunt, Carlyle, Tennyson, the Brownings, Dickens, Walter Savage Landor, Bulwer, G. P. R. James, George Henry Lewis and all the writers of his time best worth knowing.

Carlyle said "the fire of the stars was in him," and Lewis declared him to be a man of the most unquestioned genius.

His first play was entitled "Cosmo de Medici," a historical tragedy that met with fair success on the stage and very high praise from the critics. It is a better reading play than an acting one. His second venture, a single act play, "The Death of Marlowe," has been considered almost Shakespearian in its power and was received with

immense praise. "Gregory VII." was another tragedy that was well liked by the reading public, but Macready declined to produce it on the stage. His most popular work of this period, however, was a series of essays called "A New Spirit of the Age," after the manner of Hazlitt, in which he discusses the prominent writers of the time. Among the celebrities criticised are Carlyle, Macaulay, Tennyson, Elizabeth B. Barrett, Robert Browning, Leigh Hunt, Charles Dickens, Macready, Thomas Hood, Theodore Hook, Sydney Smith, Mrs. Shelley, G. P. R. James, and quite a number of others still more or less remembered. These essays are for the most part appreciations, though the criticism is discriminating. They are written in a vivacious and easy style and are still very interesting to the general reader.

In 1843 he published "Orion, an Epic Poem in Three Books." It was in pamphlet form and was sold for a farthing, "a price placed upon it" said the author, "as a sarcasm upon the low estimation into which epic poetry has fallen." It is related that one day when the author was sitting in the publisher's shop a boy came in and throwing down a penny, called for "a penny's worth of epics." The poem proved to be im-

mensely popular. Three editions were sold at a farthing, the fourth at a shilling and the fifth at half a crown. Readers of Poe's criticisms, will remember the high eulogy he passed upon this poem. He called it "one of the noblest, if not the very noblest, poetical work of the age. Its defects are trivial and conventional ; its beauties intrinsic and supreme." Nor were the English critics less appreciative, and Horne was rated in 1843 as the greatest poet of the age.

It is a noble poem full of gorgeous images and passages of sustained beauty and power. The music of the language has hardly been surpassed in modern poetry, even by Keats and Tennyson. The poem is founded on the classical story, Orion, the giant son of Poseidon, stands before the Gods and destiny, resolved to be a free agent, to use his powers for the good of mankind. He is a dreamer of noble dreams. He seeks his reward in the consciousness of a life devoted to good. He is a mighty hunter, and in the mountains of Chios encounters Artemis and her attendant nymphs. The goddess would fain teach Orion the purity of love, but his nature rebels and the episodes of his passion for Artemis, Merope and Eos follow. Destiny works out his fate, and when he is most triumphant in the cause

of man the deadly arrow of Artemis makes him the victim of jealousy.

Then Eos and Artemis unite in a prayer to Zeus to restore Orion to life. The prayer is granted. Orion is made immortal and placed among the constellations.

> Eos hides her face,
> Glowing with tears divine, within the bosom
> Of great Poseidon, in his rocking car
> Standing erect to gaze upon his sire,
> Installed midst golden fires, which ever melt
> In Eos' breath and beauty ; rising still
> With mighty brilliance, merging in the dawn—
> And circling onward in eternal youth.

If Horne had been content to rest here and write no more, his name would not be so unknown as it now is, but as the *Saturday Review* once said, the beautiful things he wrote in his prime were obscured by the mass of poor things written almost until the day of his death. He smothered and outlived his fame. Late in life he chose to write his name Richard Hengist Horne, and by this he is now known.

BULWER-LYTTON.

(1803–1873.)

It is often a curious inquiry whether books, especially novels, that once filled the world with their fame, and were in almost every hand, are still read, or whether they have passed away with the generation for which they were written. Of course, we know that the very greatest novels survive, and that somebody is always reading Scott, and Thackeray, and Dickens, and Jane Austen, and even Fielding and Richardson; but when it comes to writers well up in the second rank, are their works still read? To come directly to the subject of this article, do general readers nowadays read the novels of Bulwer-Lytton that, two generations ago, held their ground in popularity with Dickens and Thackeray? Nobody can be said to have a literary education if he is unacquainted with "Vanity Fair;" "The Newcomes," and "Henry Es-

mond;" with "Pickwick," "Oliver Twist," "Nicholas Nickleby," and "David Copperfield"; but how is it with respect to "Pelham," "Rienzi," "Paul Clifford," "The Caxtons," and "What Will He Do With It?" Are there many who can pass an examination in these and their companions? A goodly and even gorgeous company were they, but do they survive as a favorite part of every choice and well-selected library? A critic can hardly know, but there are signs that Bulwer is not dead, notwithstanding some critics have asserted that he was. His complete works may still be found on the shelves of book stores, and publishers do not wittingly publish books that do not sell, so that it is reasonable to believe that these great works of fiction still have readers and admirers. And they deserve to have.

In versatility, in capacity to work, and in determination to succeed, Bulwer-Lytton had no equal among his contemporaries, surpassing even Macaulay in those respects. The quantity of work that he did is almost appalling, and the story of his life affords an example for young men that they cannot too carefully study and imitate. If he was not a man of genius, as many critics have said, he possessed those other qualities,

patience and industry, which the highest authorities have told us were synonymous with genius.

Edward George Earle Lytton Bulwer was born May 25, 1803. His father, General Bulwer, was a distinguished British officer, who somewhat late in life married Elizabeth Lytton, the heiress of Knebworth. Edward was the youngest son, and his father died during his infancy. He was educated at home and did not have the advantage of the public schools, a circumstance he often deplores in his essays. At seventeen he was sent to Cambridge, where his fellow-collegians were Macaulay, who was soon to take his degree; Charles Villiers, who was long the "father of the House of Commons," Mackworth Praed, the brilliant poet, satirist, and politician, who died young; Alexander Cockburn, afterward Lord Chief-Justice of England, and Charles Buller, subsequently a distinguished member of parliament. It was Macaulay's omnivorous reading and power of oratory even at that early day that stirred young Bulwer's emulation, and in a letter to his mother describing Macaulay's successes he writes: "The trophies of Miltiades will not suffer me to sleep." Even among such brilliant youths his industry was noticeable, and his then ambition being to be a poet, he won the Chancellor's medal

for verse in 1825. After leaving the university his first published work was a volume of poems.

Soon after leaving the university, Bulwer contracted an imprudent marriage with an Irish beauty named Rosina Wheeler. His mother opposed the alliance and cut down his allowance to two hundred pounds a year—an income upon which he could not live even as a single man, his tastes and habits being very expensive. There was nothing to be done therefore but to take up literature as a calling, and he commenced writing with the utmost industry. His first novel and his first play were failures, but in his lexicon there was no such word as fail, and in 1828 "Pelham" appeared. It became the most popular novel of the day. A friend said to him: "I had no idea, Bulwer, that you had it in you to write such a book." To which he replied: "No man knows what he can do till he tries," a maxim that Bulwer made the corner stone of his success. He never knew what he could do till he tried, and he never was satisfied with a single trial. He kept at work until he achieved his ideal.

In that volume of essays, which he entitled "Caxtoniana," a most delightful volume, written somewhat late in life, in which he sums up his experiences in life, he sets down many of the rules

he seems to have followed, and they are worthy of quotation and imitation. In fact, the young man just setting out in life, who will practice Bulwer's maxims, will not fall far short of accomplishing Bulwer's success. A few of them are here given:

To find what you seek in the road of life, the best proverb of all is that which says, "Leave no stone unturned."

When you are engaged in any undertaking in which success depends partly on skill and partly on luck, always presuppose that the luck may go against you, for that presupposition redoubles all your efforts to obtain the advantages that belong to skill. Hope nothing from luck, and the probability is that you will be so prepared, forewarned, and forearmed, that all shallow observers will call you lucky. Before you commence anything, provide as if all hope were against you. When you set about it, act as if there were not such a thing as fear. When you have taken all the precautions as to skill in the circumstances against which you can provide, dismiss from consideration all circumstances dependent on luck which you cannot control. When you can't choose your ground it is "Forward and St. George!" But look for no help from St. George unless you have taken the same pains he did in training his horse and his dogs before he fought with the dragon.

Consider within yourself what it is you really covet! What it is that constitutes such a want, whether in your intellectual or moral being, as you must more or less satisfy or your whole life will be one regret? Is it for something that must be won through competition with those who, in Academe, Forum, or Mart, do the business of this world, or

through a superior grace in the attitude you assume among its idlers? The one object necessitates labor, the other is best gained by ease. Take your choice—do not seek to unite life's business with life's holiday. Each may have place in turn; but remember that the business leads to distinction and the holiday away from it.

He is seldom overworked who can contrive to be in advance of his work. If you have three weeks before you to learn something which a man of average quickness could learn in a week, learn it the first week and not the third. Business dispatched is business well done, but business hurried is business ill done.

These are but a sample of the practical sayings on life and its objects that may be found scattered all through Bulwer's works, particularly in his essays and later novels.

"Pelham" was followed by "Devereux" and the "Disowned," both written before he was twenty-six. He also became the editor of *Colburn's New Monthly*, succeeding Tom Campbell in that position. His domestic life proved unhappy after love's young dream had passed. That story has long been before the world in his wife's book, which, though exaggerated, is substantially true. Her tongue exasperated him and he beat her. It is a sordid tale. They separated, but were never divorced. The late Earl Lytton (Owen Meredith) was their only child.

Bulwer wrote many novels, and all had success,

but those which are known as the Caxton series are undoubtedly the best. "The Caxtons," "My Novel; or, Varieties of English Life," and "What Will He Do With It" show his highest flight, and in respect to plot, artistic merit, and literary finish are unequaled in the language. The reader who cannot become absorbed in these is hard to please.

Two of his plays were equally successful, and "Richelieu" and "The Lady of Lyons" still hold the stage.

G. P. R. JAMES

(1801–1860.)

CONTEMPORARY with Bulwer-Lytton there was another writer almost as popular and still more prolific, whose novels may still be read with a considerable degree of pleasure by those interested in the literature of the past.

In these days when the annual output of novels —many of which are of a high degree of merit —is something tremendous, it is hard to understand the avidity with which our grandfathers, and particularly our grandmothers, looked forward to the publication of the next new novel. But there was a time when the production was not so plentiful, and when a novel by G. P. R. James was hailed with almost the same sort of acclaim as Scott had received in the earlier years of the past century. In fact, James was supposed to be the lineal successor of Sir Walter. He followed the great master in writing historical novels, and in 1822 he published "Richelieu," the first, as

it is one of the best, of his stories. He was but twenty-one at the time, but his genius was recognized by the leading critics of the time. Professor Wilson, the editor of *Blackwood*, said : " ' Richelieu ' is one of the most spirited romances I ever read ; characters well drawn, incidents well managed, story gradually progressive, catastrophe at once natural and unexpected, moral good, but not goody, and the whole felt in every chapter to be the work of a gentleman."

Washington Irving was in England at this time, pursuing his own literary career, and he encouraged James to continue his writing. Sir Walter Scott read " Richelieu " and tendered his friendship and assistance to the author. On every hand the young novelist met with encouragement. And from that time he wrote with the most astonishing rapidity, and yet his work was, as a rule, received with the greatest of favor. If any one will take the trouble to look over the catalogue of " Harper's Select Library of Novels " published, say from 1835 to 1855, he will find that the novels of G. P. R. James hold a very distinguished place in the list. And not improperly so. He was a remarkably good story-teller, and that he is not much read in these days is not due so much to the fact that he is not worth reading, as

it is that so many other and more modern story-tellers press upon us. Leigh Hunt, who was certainly a most excellent critic, and withal a very honest one, once wrote :

I hail every fresh publication of James, though I half know what he is going to do with his lady, and his gentleman, and his landscape, and his mystery, and his orthodoxy, and his criminal trial. But I am charmed with the new amusement which he brings out of the old materials. I look on him as I look on a musician famous for "variations." I am grateful for his vein of cheerfulness, for his singularly varied and vivid landscapes, for his power of painting women at once ladylike and loving (a rare talent), for his making lovers to match, at once beautiful and well-bred, and for the solace which all this has afforded me ; sometimes over and over again, in illness and in convalescence, when I required interest without violence, and entertainment at once animated and mild.

Other critics have written none the less favorably, and even the mighty Lockhart looked favorably upon him. Judged by the modern standards he is not quite up to the level of a great author. Doubtless his stories are all now forgotten, and even the "Solitary Horseman" and the "Two Cavaliers" are no more remembered, though once the sport and play of the humorist and the parodist. But he was upon the whole an admirable story-teller and a good writer as well.

He used over and over again all the well-worn stock ingredients of a novel,—court trials, combats, tournaments, rescues, forged wills, forlorn maidens, mysterious strangers, renowned heroes, and imperishable actions. With these for his quarry, he wrought industriously for years, and the mere list of his works is simply astounding. Not even Dumas with his unmatchable novel factory, where he employed a half-dozen journeymen to turn out words by the wholesale, could more than equal him.

In the annals of bookmaking there has been no such workman as George Payne Rainsford James. Novels, histories, poems, tales and sketches poured from his prolific pen as if it was inspired. He was the author of fifty novels, each in three volumes, a dozen histories, and numerous other sketches on many subjects. In all, the dictionary of authors gives him credit for two hundred printed volumes.

He was born in London in 1801, and commenced to write when he was still a youth. He was historiographer to William IV., and later held a consulship in this country, and afterward in Venice. He died in 1860. What fame he achieved comes from his works, and notwithstanding the volume of matter he wrote, some of it is

well entitled to remembrance, and I think will, in a degree, hold its place in literature. "Richelieu," "Arabella Stuart," "Arrah Neil," "Philip Augustus," "Russell," "Agnes Sorel," "The Smuggler," and "Darnley," are all good novels, and are a hundred times better than the trash that is spawned from the press of to-day. One will find infinite amusement and pastime in these old-fashioned novels, and that they are not out of date is evidenced by the fact that they are still published.

He was not a Scott, a Bulwer-Lytton, a Thackeray or a Dickens. He drew no character that any reader of his novels cares to remember, and we cannot find among them a Bailie Nicol Jarvie, a Baron Bradwardine, a Pelham, a Guy Darrel, a Becky Sharp, a Colonel Newcome, a Sam Weller, or a Uriah Heap. One may read fifty of James' novels with the utmost satisfaction, and even pleasure, and come away from them with a mind perfectly blank as to the characters. They are mere puppets, and have made no impression on him whatever. Nevertheless, he has had a pleasant time. And this, after all, as I take it, is the ultimate expectation of the inveterate novel reader.

WILLIAM M. THACKERAY.

(1811–1863.)

And now they are talking of a "Thackeray revival," just as a little while ago they were talking of a "Dickens revival." There are no "revivals" with these great writers, because they are always being read, and new editions of their works are published every year just like school books. It is the same with Scott. No library is complete without Scott, Dickens, and Thackeray, and in these days when the passion for reading is universal, no boy's or girl's education is finished till they have read them.

But it so happens that whenever some one writes an essay, a criticism, or an appreciation of one or the other of them, the shout is raised at once, we are to have a "revival." A little while ago Mr. Swinburne wrote some extravagant things about Dickens—or rather wrote about Dickens in his most extravagant manner. This led to other articles, and as a consequence much was said about the "Dickens revival."

In like manner two or three articles on Thackeray have lately appeared, and we are hearing of a "Thackeray revival." G. K. Chesterton, the new and forceful young English critic, has been having his say about Thackeray, and as everything he writes is thoughtful, fresh, and pungent, his article in the London *Bookman* has attracted much attention. His appreciation of the great writer, it is needless to say, is of the highest, and he protests most earnestly against the fashion of calling Thackeray a cynic.

So far as Thackeray's cynicism is concerned, it may be said that Shirley Brooks settled that question in his poem written at the time of Thackeray's death, from which I will quote three stanzas:

He was a cynic! By his life all wrought
Of generous acts, mild words and gentle ways;
His heart wide open to all kindly thought,
His hand so quick to give, his tongue to praise.

He was a cynic! You might read it writ
In that broad brow crowned with its silver hair;
In those blue eyes, with childlike candor lit,
In that sweet smile his lips were wont to wear.

He was a cynic! By the love that clung
About him from his children, friends, and kin;
By the sharp hand, light pen, and gossip tongue,
Wrought in him, chafing the soft heart within.

It is the merest cant to talk of Thackeray's cynicism. It requires a large element of hatred of mankind in one's nature to be a cynic. Pope was a cynic; Dean Swift was a cynic, and they both despised their fellow-men, and could say no good thing of them. Sterne was cynical, and so were Byron and Carlyle, but Thackeray, never. He was a wise humorist, who laughed at or ridiculed the follies and weaknesses of men, feeling that he, too, shared in the common heritage of folly—" knowing also that he, himself, must die."

Since the publication of Mrs. Ritchie's biographical edition of her father's works, and the introductions that accompany each volume, there has been no excuse for misunderstanding the character of Thackeray. His letters abound in love and devotion for those near and dear to him, and in his appreciation of the general goodness of humanity. All the geniality and tenderness of his nature, his humor and pathos, are to be found in these friendly confidences dashed off to his mother, his stepfather, his daughters and his familiar friends. They show what his nature was, and that, notwithstanding his ironical and satirical views of life, he possessed a great, throbbing and tender heart, not hating, but loving, mankind.

The late Mrs. Lynn Linton knew both Dickens

and Thackeray intimately. As to Dickens there was "a strain of hardness in his nature." Thackeray she liked better. To her he was generous, indolent, loving, tender-hearted, and very flexible. She seems to have known the secret history of both these great writers, but never told it, whatever it was. It is well known that Thackeray enjoined upon his daughters and intimate friends that no biography of him was to be written. He had seen enough of the world to know that rarely can one man be described truly by another, and he preferred that his works should speak for him.

And what matchless works they are and what well-springs of delight! Never was Buffon's aphorism that "the style is the man himself" truer of any writer than of Thackeray. It was the fitting and appropriate garment of his thought, no matter under what circumstances he was expressing it, whether for the private eye of a friend or for the general public, whether in a letter or a Roundabout Paper. There are passages in his correspondence that sound like passages in the novels or essays, and vice versa. He is "familiar, but by no means vulgar." There is nothing coarse in his manner—no horse play or boisterous guffaws. His English is purity itself, and his style answers to Coleridge's definition "the best words in the

best places." No conceits, no verbal a sky-rockets, no straining for effect, no antitheses, no super-eloquence, but gleaming through all there is beauty and humor and tenderness and pathos.

This marvelous style has been sometimes criticised, and a mousing grammarian can doubtless pick out blemishes in it. They say he rather overworks the "and which" on occasion. I don't know, perhaps he does. I forget what little grammer I ever knew when I read him, and am so carried away with what he is saying that I do not perceive whether his nouns and verbs and moods and tenses are precisely what they ought to be or not. My own opinion is they are, and if they are not grammatical, then so much the worse for grammar.

The critics are also somewhat at outs as to where "he picked up that style."

Herbert Paul, in an essay on Sterne, says that Thackeray got his style from the author of "The Sentimental Journey." Others think that Fielding had something to do with it. There is no question that Thackeray knew the works of those authors, and of all the other eighteenth-century writers, as he knew his a b c's, but he was no imitator of any of them. His manner was entirely his own, as a hundred quotations could be cited to prove. And yet, by his occasional use of

French colloquial words and phrases he sometimes reminds one of Sterne. But in the quality of his humor, in the purity of his thought, in archness of expression, and in pathos that is unsurpassed he rises above and far beyond the author of "Tristram Shandy." When you come to analyze them the similarity vanishes.

Of the novels "Vanity Fair" is the masterpiece, the most superb comedy of manners in the English language. It is a picture of life in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, cynical and satirical often, but upon the whole wonderfully lifelike and true. The characters are creations, and will live as long as fiction endures. Rebecca Sharp is the ideal English woman adventuress, an intellectual being without passion and with but little human sympathy. And yet we do not altogether despise her, and in the course of her checkered fortunes often wish that she would succeed. Poor thing, what chance did she have to make her way, with neither family nor fortune to give her a start? Here was an ambitious and intellectual girl who had her own livelihood to gain and fortune to make, and not a friend in all the wide world to help her! She has often been compared to Balzac's Valerie Marneffe, but the English woman is the finer portrayal, and human

to the core. She said, and it is true, that "it is easy to be good if you are rich"—that is, good in the sense that you do not have to steal for a living. She secretly marries Rawdon Crawley, only to find that she has lost a better match in Sir Pitt. She fascinates Lord Steyne, but she reaps no benefit. This leads to one of the most powerful as well as the most admired scenes in the novel.

It is a great novel, Shakespearian in its breadth and power and knowledge of human nature.

"Pendennis" and "The Newcomes" are greater favorites perhaps than "Vanity Fair," and they are wonderfully fine. Thackeray was not a great story-teller, so we are not much moved as a rule by the incidents and adventures that are described, but we greatly enjoy meeting Major Pendennis, Captain Costigan, Harry Foker, Warrington, Clive Newcome, Lady Kew, Ethel, Blanche Amory, J. J., Fred Bayham, Rev. Charles Honeyman and a long list of others. Few galleries in fiction are better graced with portraits than Thackeray's. Some great and noble, some mean and unworthy, all attractive and interesting. Only Shakespeare, Scott and Dickens are his equals in portraiture, only Shakespeare his equal in style.

"Henry Esmond" is in a different style

and is remarkable as a sustained *tour de force*, written in the language of Queen Anne's time. There is nothing finer in the English language than some of the scenes and descriptions in this beautiful story. It purports to be the memoirs of Colonel Henry Esmond, who, after a troubled life in England, serving also in the wars of Marlborough, retired to the seclusion of a Virginia plantation. We are introduced to the life and manners of the time of Queen Anne, meet Mr. Addison, Captain Dick Steele, and see at a distance an eccentric clergyman named Swift. These, of course, are mere shadows in the background, for the main actors are Esmond, and his dear Lady Castlewood, Beatrix, the Pretender, and Frank Castlewood.

Thackeray's fame as a writer of prose has obscured somewhat his reputation as a poet, but his ballads and poems are well worth reading. Indeed, no one can read them without returning again and again to enjoy their delicious humor and satire. They may not be the highest order of poetry, but they have poetic fire and beauty, and there is little doubt that if he had confined his writing to verse, as Tennyson did, he would have won a high place among British poets.

The readers of "Pendennis" will remember

one of the most beautiful of his poems, "At the Church Gate," which "Pen" is supposed to have thrown off to meet the requirements of a certain picture called the "Church Porch," which a publisher had had engraved, but could get no poem to match. It was Pen's first chance to earn a livelihood as a writer. The lines are worth remembering.

Although I enter not,
Yet round about the spot
  Sometimes I hover,
And at the sacred gate
With longing eyes I wait,
  Expectant of her.

The Minster bell tolls out
Above the city's rout
  And noise and humming;
They've stopped the chiming bell,
I hear the organ's swell—
  She's coming, she's coming!

My lady comes at last,
Timid and stepping fast,
  And hastening hither,
With modest eyes downcast,
She comes—she's here—she's past,
  May heaven go with her.

Kneel undisturbed, fair saint,
Pour out your praise or plaint
  Meekly and duly,

I will not enter there,
To sully your pure prayer
With thoughts unruly.

But suffer me to pace
Round the forbidden place,
Lingering a minute,
Like outcast spirits, who wait,
And see through heaven's gate,
Angels within it.

Of his half serious, half humorous verse, which bring to us a smile and a sigh, "The Ballad of Bouillabaisse," "The Age of Wisdom," "The Cane-Bottom'd Chair," and "The End of the Play," are among the most exquisite things in English poetry. They show the self-restraint and self-command of the polished man of the world, not hardened into cynicism but preserving in his heart a cherished place for the memories and friendships of his youth. He looks back with affection on the past and upon those whom he has loved, but it is not to weep, though the unbidden tear may fall.

Ah, me! how quick the days are flitting!
I mind me of a time that's gone,
When here I'd sit, as now I'm sitting,
In this same place—but not alone.
A fair young form was nestled near me.
A dear, dear face looked fondly up,

And sweetly spoke, and smiled to cheer me—
There's no one now to share my cup.

I drink it as the fates ordain it,
Come fill it, and have done with rhymes ;
Fill up the lonely glass and drain it
In memory of dear old times.
Welcome the wine, whate'er the seal is ;
And sit you down and say your grace
With thankful heart, whate'er the meal is—
Here comes the smoking Bouillabaisse !

"The Cane-Bottom'd Chair" is one of my favorites, though I can quote but a stanza or two here :

In tattered old slippers that toast at the bars,
And a ragged old jacket perfumed with cigars,
Away from the world and its toils and its cares,
I've a snug little kingdom up four pair of stairs.

* * * * * * *

But of all the cheap treasures that garnish my nest,
There's one that I love and I cherish the best ;
For the finest of couches that's padded with hair
I never would change thee, my cane-bottom'd chair.

'Tis a bandy-legg'd high-shouldered, worm-eaten seat,
With a creaking old back, and twisted old feet ;
But since the fair morning when Fanny sat there,
I bless thee and love thee, old cane-bottom'd chair.

It was but a moment she sat in this place,
She'd a scarf on her neck, and a smile on her face !
A smile on her face and a rose in her hair,
And she sat there and bloom'd in my cane-bottom'd chair.

She comes from the past and revisits my room ;
She looks as she then did, all beauty and bloom ;
So smiling and tender, so fresh and so fair,
As yonder she sits in my cane-bottom'd chair.

Thackeray has four translations of paraphrases of four of Beranger's poems that are perfect of their kind, so completely do they catch the form and spirit of the originals. I quote from "The Garret"—Beranger's "Le Grenier" :

With pensive eyes the little room I view,
Where in my youth I weathered it so long,
With a wild mistress, a staunch friend or two,
And a light heart still breaking into song ;
Making a mock of life and all its cares,
Rich in the glory of my rising sun,
Lightly I vaulted up four pair of stairs,
In the brave days when I was twenty-one.

Yes, 'tis a garret—let him know't who will—
There was my bed—full hard it was and small ;
My table there—and I decipher still
Half a lame couplet charcoaled on the wall.
Ye joys, that Time hath swept with him away,
Come to mine eyes, ye dreams of love and fun ;
For you I pawned my watch how many a day,
In the brave days when I was twenty-one.

* * * * * *

Let us begone—the place is sad and strange—
How far, far off these happy times appear ;
All that I have to live I'd gladly change
For one such month as I have wasted here—

To draw long dreams of beauty, love, and power,
From founts of hope that never will outrun,
And drink all life's quintessence in an hour,
Give me the days when I was twenty-one.

His more humorous poems, such as the "Ballads of Policeman X," were written for Punch and were intended to satirize the follies of the time, and even where the allusions are obscure or forgotten they are still capital reading.

Thackeray's muse was sometimes coy and uncertain, and Mrs. Ritchie says :

When my father wrote a poem he used to be more agitated than when he wrote in prose. He would come into the room worried and excited, saying : "Here are two more days wasted, I have done nothing at all. It has taken me four mornings' work to produce six lines." Then, after a further struggle, all would go well.

The first collection of Thackeray's poems was published by him when he was in the United States on his second lecturing tour. The preface is dated Boston, October 27, 1855, in which he says :

These ballads have been written during the last fifteen years, and are now gathered by the author from his own books and the various periodicals in which the pieces appear originally. They are published simultaneously in England and America, where a public which has been interested in the writer's prose stories, he hopes, may be kindly disposed to his little volume of verses.

The volume was very popular when first published, but the prose writings have so completely overshadowed the poems that they have almost been forgotten. They are well worthy of recall and scarcely inferior to his best prose. They are charming and unique.

CHARLES DICKENS.[1]

(1812–1870.)

It is an interesting question whether after the lapse of a quarter of a century the popularity of Dickens continues or is likely to endure. We are always looking "into the seeds of time to see which grain will grow and which will not," and in nothing so much as in respect to literary fame. Will this poet live? Will the poem that everybody is reading and praising be read fifty or a hundred years from now? Will the popular novel of to-day also amuse and interest our grandchildren? Or are these only added ephemera to the mighty waste of long-forgotten things? These are always notable questions when asked about any person, but when propounded about a writer who held his own generation spellbound and was the most popular writer of his time, they are doubly so.

It is the fashion nowadays in high critical

quarters to disparage Dickens. They say his pathos is pinchbeck, his humor vulgar, his incessant caricature unnatural and his mannerisms tiresome. Mr. Howells, in a fine critical essay, has declared the art of Dickens would not be tolerated in these days. Brander Matthews willingly surrenders Dickens to the scalpel of Mr. Howells, though he will fight for Thackeray to the death.

There are others also who are not ashamed to say that they cannot read Dickens.

Nevertheless the "Master" still lives, as is proved by the innumerable editions of the novels still published.

One of the criticisms most frequently heard against Dickens is his proneness to exaggeration, and that consequently his characters are out of drawing, as the artists say. They are not persons, but peculiarities, mere caricatures of humanity. And they say this is not good art. Possibly it is not, but the story is told all the same, and there is no reader but feels that the life-blood is pulsing through the veins of every one of Dickens' creations. Mr. Wilkins Micawber or Mr. Newman Noggs are undoubtedly exaggerations, and perhaps one does not meet them in real life, but how alive they are, for all that!

Nor do they seem like exaggerations on the

stage when portrayed by the genius of a Jefferson or a Brougham, a very good test, for not even Jefferson could give them life if the author had not. Dickens is in literature what Hogarth was in art, and he makes us laugh by the very violence of his caricatures, but underneath there is the calm and settled purpose to right wrongs; to expose shams, to unmask villainies and to do good to humanity. Irony and ridicule are his potent weapons, and he uses them with merciless severity.

He deals with the pathetic, for tears are akin to laughter. Perhaps his pathos in places is a little too much affected, and has not the true ring to it. The deaths of Little Nell and of poor Paul Dombey belong to the stock order of materials in common use by novelists, but they have made countless thousands of people shed tears. Is it not on record how that hard-headed critic, lawyer and judge, Francis Jeffrey, of the *Edinburgh Review*, cried and boo-hooed as if his heart would break over the death of Little Nell? Is it not a matter of history that when Dickens was coming to this part of the story, and it seemed inevitable that Little Nell must die in the very next number, that he received letters from all over England imploring him to let her live? Since that day,

perhaps, we have become more hardened through the fact that very ordinary writers have overworked such scenes for the purpose of extracting a few tears from sympathetic readers. Those tears of sympathy refuse to flow, and such passages make very good "skip," but it is not by these scenes that Dickens continues to live. His pathos may be debatable, but his humor is not, nor his long gallery of ever-living pictures, his Sam Weller and Sairey Gamp, his Dick Swiveller and Charley Bates, his Oliver and Pip, and what countless others besides?

Dickens remains vital because of his never failing sympathy with all human interests. He saw injustice and oppression and cruelty and he furnished an armory of weapons against them that are as potent to-day as when they were first used. One of the objections certain modern critics urge against him is that he wrote "with a purpose," as if that was the one unforgivable sin against artistic writing. Most assuredly he wrote with a purpose, and as a result we have Mr. Bumble and Oliver, Mr. Squeers and Mrs. Squeers, Little Miss Flite and the Jellaby family, Esther Summerson and Mr. Turveydrop, Mr. Pecksniff and Mark Tapley; in fact, the great novels, "Copperfield," "Martin Chuzzlewit,"

" Nickleby " and " Bleak House " and their numberless creations. " Little Doritt," to be sure, is full of purpose, and at the same time not up to the true Dickens standard, but even that is only a failure by comparison with its author's best. It used to be said, as the great novels came out from time to time, that " Dickens had worked himself out." Perhaps there was more of this kind of bold, disjointed chat on the appearance of " Little Dorritt " than at any other time, but succeeding that came the " Tale of Two Cities," and then " Great Expectations," two of the very best of his stories, but not the masterpieces. " Copperfield " alone is entitled to that distinction, though " Nicholas Nickleby " and " Martin Chuzzlewit " are good seconds.

Yes, Dickens wrote " with a purpose," and he had some part in bringing about the reform of the law in the matter of delays in Chancery, and imprisonment for debt. Most of all, he broke up the infamous Yorkshire schools.

Not less unsparing was he in attacking private foibles and sins, exposing shams and heartlessness, and in holding up to everlasting scorn the vices of avarice, greed and hypocrisy. What oppressors of their fellows, because of their greed and avarice, were Bounderby and Gradgrind, Mr.

Murdstone and his stony-hearted sister, Old Scrooge, before his dream, Ralph Nickleby and Anthony Chuzzlewit and his son Jonas. Could such a father have any other than such a son?

"The very first word which this excellent boy learned to spell was gain, and the second (when he came into two syllables), was money." And the result was that "having been long taught by his father to overreach everybody, he had imperceptibly acquired a love of overreaching that venerable monitor himself." Not only so, but he regarded that parent in his old age as an undesirable personal asset to be disposed of in the quickest possible way, which Jonas in fact attempts to bring about by the use of poison.

Then there is the immortal Pecksniff, who stands to-day in the minds of men as the incarnation of hypocrisy. He is neither Molière's Tartuffe, nor Sheridan's Joseph Surface, but a distinct creation, the embodiment of a form of hypocrisy familiar to every observer of society, but never before so exactly personified. He is entirely moral, effusive and tender in the presence of visitors or strangers and he can display the kindness of his paternal heart in domestic scenes arranged beforehand in a way that is quite effective in its results for a time. He names his daughters

Mercy and Charity, and nobody can be more engagingly moral and virtuous while he is under the public eye.

The mannerisms of Dickens' style have sometimes been severely criticised, and doubtless it is not a style to be lightly copied, any more than Macaulay's or Carlyle's can be. But Dickens has a style, and a very engaging one, and it precisely serves his purpose. It grew out of his own genius and was not assumed. It is as integral a part of the story as the characters.

Whatever may be said of Dickens by the high and mighty critics, one thing is certain—the world owes him a heavy debt of gratitude for the kindly spirit of peace, charity and good will which he impressed upon the Christmas season. The doctrine of good cheer and jollity and love at this season dates from Dickens, and if he did not invent the modern Christmas he most surely discovered and exploited it. His Christmas stories are among the classics of English literature, the permanent possession of all who love sentimentality and good fellowship. For a brief space they carry one out of himself, and for a moment at least make him better and happier. Take the "Christmas Carol." Can any one read that story and not be the better for it? It preaches the

gospel of good cheer; it shows the beauty of doing for others; it breathes in every line the spirit of Christmas joy and merriment.

The story may not come up to the highest canons of art; the supernatural machinery of ghosts may not conform to the realism of the day, but the story is there and its moral, and "Old Scrooge" comes out all right, after his visions of Christmas past, present and to come.

Christmas literature may be of finer quality today than it was fifty years ago when Dickens and Thackeray were the annual purveyors of this kind of cheer, but somehow or other the Christmas stories of the present time do not make the impression theirs did, and we miss the robustness and heartiness of Old Wardle and Pickwick and Sam Weller and Trotty Veck and John Peerybingle and the rest.

The best three of Dickens' Christmas stories are "A Christmas Carol," first published in 1843; "The Chimes," published in 1844, and "The Cricket on the Hearth," published in 1845.

One of these, "The Cricket on the Hearth," has been made forever memorable to all American playgoers by the art of Joseph Jefferson, whose portrayal of Caleb Plummer will never be for-

gotten by those who have once seen him in that strange but noble character.

"The Chimes" is the story of Trotty Veck, a very humble person, a ticket porter to run errands, who stood outside the church door where the chimes rang. It is a strange, weird tale—a prose poem—a Christmas idyl of sorrow and happiness. The chimes at last ring out and bring joy to the heart of the poor ticket porter. Here is the conclusion:

> Had Trotty dreamed? Or are his joys and sorrows, and the actors in them, but a dream; himself a dream; the teller of this tale a dreamer, waking but now? If it be so, oh, listener, dear to him in all his visions, try to bear in mind the stern realities from which these shadows come; and in your sphere—none is too wide and none too limited for such an end—endeavor to correct, improve and soften them! So may the new year be a happy one to you, happy to many more whose happiness depends on you! So may each year be happier than the last, and not the meanest of our brethren or sisterhood debarred their rightful share in what our Great Creator formed them to enjoy.

Dickens may not be to the present and future generations all that he was to his own. He was the most popular novelist of his day, because he spoke directly to the sensibilities of the men and women of his day. Times change and men and women with them, so that it would not be strange

if the popularity of this great genius should suffer some diminution. He drew his pictures large and with free hand tending to exaggeration. He laid on colors coarsely, but no one could mistake his meaning or the lesson he would teach. There are those to-day who do not like these loud and boisterous descriptions and portraitures and prefer their pictures in miniature and more finely executed. This is but natural, the reasonable swinging back of the pendulum carried too far.

But his novels are too vital, too deeply informed with human nature, ever to lose their hold entirely on the minds and imaginations of men. His genius was creative and in it was combined a rare completeness of humor and pathos that must survive as long as our literature endures.

And particularly is this true in respect to these Christmas stories that appeal in so many ways to the heart of humanity. Whoever comes under this charm and feels their force will recognize the debt he owes to this great writer, who has revealed the spirit of Christmas to the world.

Let us thank heaven for Charles Dickens and the Christmastide.

WILKIE COLLINS.

(1824–1889.)

WILKIE COLLINS was in truth the prince of story-tellers and held his readers breathless from beginning to end. No one ever yet began one of his novels and threw it aside before the end came. They are not stories for a vacant half hour, to be picked up and thrown down at pleasure. Their fascination is of the deadly sort that holds the reader long after the midnight twelve has struck. For ingenuity of plot, for cleverness in handling the evolution of the plot and for power of rousing the reader's curiosity Mr. Collins stands alone. Even Dickens could not weave a chain of mysteries equal to Collins, and of course Thackeray never tried it. Collins created but very few characters whose names are remembered, but the incidents and adventures he related are so ingenious, and often so startling, that they hold our interest up to the last page. We care but little for the fate of any particular character, but we are

bound to go on with the story "to see how it comes out." Whether his works will live as literature may be doubtful, but as a writer of detective novels he has no English rival or equal, and he will consequently have at times and seasons a considerable circle of readers.

The greatest of his novels is "The Woman in White," which is, indeed, one of the memorable novels of the nineteenth century. Count Fosco, with his white mice and canaries, his resplendent waistcoats, his passion for music and his overmastering vanity, is one of the most masterly and superb creations in all fiction. What a masterful villain he was, and how completely he tamed his impetuous English wife! Even Marian Halcomb, who tells a part of the story in her diary, felt the spell of his magic influence. She thus describes him:

He looks like a man who could tame anything. If he had married a tigress, he would have tamed the tigress. If he had married me, I should have made his cigarettes, as his wife does. I should have held my tongue when he looked at me, as she does hers.

I am almost afraid to confess it, even to these secret pages. The man has interested me, has attracted me, has forced me to like him. In two short days he has made his way into my favorable estimation, and how he has worked the miracle is more than I can tell.

She goes on to analyze his character, to find the secret of his power, but can arrive at no conclusion. In time she finds him out, and in the end it is her spirit of goodness that overcomes his spirit of evil. It is a thrilling story, the secret of which is not unfolded until the last chapter is reached.

"The Moonstone" is by all odds the most popular of the novels, and it is well worth reading. It deals with the theft of a celebrated diamond known as the moonstone, a famous gem in the annals of India which once adorned the forehead of the moon god in the holy city of Benares. When that city was captured by the Mohammedans the gem passed to them, and then it passed from one lawless hand to another, until the British conquests at last brought it into the possession of Major Herncastle, an English officer. Many superstitions were connected with the ownership of this splendid diamond, and the story opens with the return of the Herncastle family to England with the diamond in their possession. Simultaneously several Indian Brahmins appear in the neighborhood of the Herncastle home. Then follow the most dramatic situations and experiences, and a struggle for the possession of the diamond, and we hang upon the varying for-

tunes of the actors with the keenest interest. Most of the characters are not much more than lay figures, but the detective, Sergeant Cuff, and the old servant, Gabriel Betteridge, are very life-like.

"No Name" is also a finished story and has many charms. Captain Wragge is a confidence man of the most excellent sort, who keeps a regular book account of his rascalities. To him Magdalen Vanstone applies to obtain assistance in a scheme requiring more or less of underhand work, for which she pays him liberally. The interest of the story centers in the game, openly played, between Magdalen, assisted by the captain, and Mrs. Lecount, the housekeeper of Noel Vanstone. It is one of the most original as well as one of the most fascinating chapters in the story. Noel Vanstone, who has inherited the fortune that should have gone to Magdalen and her sister, is the prize of the contest, and Magdalen finally wins. Noel offers her marriage, and this is what she has been scheming for. But no sooner does she realize what she has done than, filled with doubts and fears, she rushes to end all by suicide. From this, too, she starts back, and finally determines that chance shall settle the question. She is sitting by an open window,

looking out upon the sea, watching a little fleet of coasting vessels sailing by. If in half an hour an even number of vessels passed she would live; if an odd number, she would die.

With that final resolution she rested her head against the window and waited for the ships to pass. . . . . Two minutes to the end of the half-hour and seven ships. Twenty-nine and nothing followed in the wake of the seventh ship. The minute hand of the watch moved on halfway to thirty, and still the white, heaving sea was a misty blank. Without moving her head from the window she took the poison in one hand and raised the watch in the other. As the quick seconds counted each other out, her eyes, as quick as they, looked from the watch to the sea, from the sea to the watch—looked for the last time to the sea—and saw the eighth ship. She never moved, she never spoke. The death of thought, the death of feeling, seemed to have come to her already. She put back the poison mechanically on the ledge of the window and watched as in a dream the ship gliding smoothly on its silent way—gliding until it melted into shadow—gliding until it was lost in the mist.

This is a good specimen of Wilkie Collins' style.

"Armadale" comes next to "No Name" in interest and popular favor, while its plot is the most intricate of any of the novels. It will easily hold any reader until long past midnight, but for persons of sensitive nerves it is by no means a midnight story.

LADY CAROLINE NORTON.

(1808–1877.)

JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY, in writing to his wife from London in 1858, tells of his meeting with Lady Caroline Norton, and thus describes her:

She is rather above middle height. Her face is certainly extremely beautiful. The hair is raven black—violet black—without a thread of silver. The eyes very large, with dark lashes, and black as death; the nose straight; the mouth flexible and changing; with teeth which in themselves would make the fortune of an ordinary face—such is her physiognomy; and when you add to this extraordinary poetic genius, descent from that famous Sheridan, who has made talent hereditary in his family, a low, sweet voice and a flattering manner, you can understand how she twisted men's heads off and hearts out, we will not be particular how many years ago.

In other of his letters, Mr. Motley dwells on the exceeding grace, beauty, wit and genius of Mrs. Norton, who showed the author of "The Dutch Republic" many kind attentions when he

was being lionized by London society after the publication of his history. At this time she was in her fiftieth year, but he says she did not look to be thirty. Indeed, she never did seem to grow old.

Tom Sheridan, the son of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, inherited his mother's beauty. He married a very beautiful woman and their three daughters became renowned in English society.

The eldest was Helen Selina, who married Henry Blackwood, afterward Lord Dufferin. The late Lord Dufferin was her son. The second daughter was Caroline Elizabeth, who married the Honorable George C. Norton; and the third was Georgina, who became the Duchess of Somerset, and at the famous Eglinton tournament was crowned the Queen of Beauty. The eldest and youngest were most happily married, but Lady Caroline's husband was a spendthrift and a brute, who abused her and took from her all the money she earned by her pen, frequently reducing her and her children to destitution. He was, besides, insanely jealous of her, and brought an action against Lord Melbourne on her account. In this he properly and justly failed, and in 1840 Mrs. Norton obtained a separation from him.

Fanny Kemble, who lived on terms of inti-

macy with her, in her "Records of a Girlhood," describes an evening she passed at the Nortons:

A host of distinguished public and literary men were crowded into a small drawing-room which was literally resplendent with the light of Sheridan beauty, male and female. Mrs. Sheridan, the mother of the graces, more beautiful than anybody but her daughters; Lady Grahame, their beautiful aunt; Mrs. Norton, Mrs. Blackwood (Lady Dufferin), Georgina Sheridan (Duchess of Somerset and queen of beauty by universal consent), and Charles Sheridan, their younger brother, a sort of younger brother of the Apollo Belvedere. Certainly I never saw such a bunch of beautiful creatures all growing on one stem. I remarked it to Mrs. Norton, who looked complacently around her tiny drawing-room and said: "Yes, we are rather good-looking people." She was splendidly handsome, of an un-English character of beauty, her rather large and heavy head and features recalling the grandest Grecian and Italian models, to the latter of whom her rich coloring and blue-black braids of hair gave her an additional resemblance. Though neither as perfectly lovely as the Duchess of Somerset, nor as perfectly charming as Lady Dufferin, she produced a far more striking impression then either of them by the combination of the poetical genius with which she alone of all three was gifted with the brilliant wit and power of repartee which they possessed in common with her.

Mrs. Norton was born in 1808 and married Mr. Norton in 1827. After her separation she maintained herself by her pen. She was beautiful to the last, and in 1877, in her sixty-ninth year, she married Sir William Sterling Maxwell,

a distinguished Scotch baronet, who had long been devoted to her. She died a few weeks after marriage.

As an authoress Mrs. Norton was very popular. In reviewing a volume of her poems published in 1840 the *Quarterly Review* said:

> This lady is the Byron of our modern poetesses. She has very much of that intense personal passion by which Byron's poetry is distinguished from the larger grasp and deeper communion with man and nature of Wordsworth. She has also Byron's beautiful intervals of tenderness, his strong, practical thought and forceful expression.

Mrs. Norton, indeed, contested the palm of popularity with Elizabeth Barrett (Mrs. Browning), and in the criticism of the day the two were compared and contrasted. Mrs. Browning's poetry has outlived Mrs. Norton's for the reason that it is not so directly personal to herself. Her ideals were higher, her themes of more universal interest.

Mrs. Norton had suffered much and she wrote on the oppression of her sex and was influential in bringing about some reform in respect to the right and property of married women. One of her principal poems is entitled "The Dream," which in some tenderly pathetic verse she dedicates to the Duchess of Sutherland.

The story is that of a mother watching over a lovely daughter sleeping. The daughter awakes and tells how she had dreamed of the bliss of first love and an early marriage, and how happy it made her. The mother becomes admonitory and describes the many accidents to which wedded happiness is liable, and exhorts to moderation of hope, for strife may come and many sorrows. There are many strong and passionate passages in the poem, particularly when the mother describes the anguish of heart in which the wife appeals to the husband.

> Kneel, dash thyself upon the senseless ground,
> Writhe as the worm writhes with dividing wound,
> Invoke the heaven that knows thy sorrow's strength,
> By all the softening memories of youth,
> By every hope that cheered thine earlier day,
> By every tear that washes wrath away,
> By every old remembrance long gone by,
> By every pang that makes thee yearn to die ;
> And learn at length how deep and stern a blow
> Man's hand can strike, and yet no pity show.

But there are many tender passages also in this poem. She describes the poor man returning to his humble cottage from his daily toil in lines of great felicity :

> Still as his heart forestalls his weary pace,
> Fondly he dreams of each familiar face,

Recalls the treasures of his narrow life,
His rosy children and his sunburnt wife,
To whom his coming is his chief event
Of simple days in cheerful labor spent,
For him they wait, for him they welcome home,
Fixed sentinels look forth to see him come ;
The fagot sent for when the fire grew dim,
The frugal meal prepared, are all for him ;
For him the watching of that sturdy boy,
For him those smiles of tenderness and joy,
For him—who plods his sauntering way along,
Whistling the fragment of some village song ?

She is remembered now, however, by her minor poems and songs, such as "Love Not," "I Dream't But 'Twas a Dream," "The Fairy Bells," "Bingen on the Rhine," "We Have Been Friends Together," and "The Arab's Farewell to His Horse."

The heroine of George Meredith's brilliant novel, "Diana of the Crossways," has generally been supposed to have been drawn from Mrs. Norton. One of the principal incidents in that story is the betrayal of a cabinet secret to a newspaper. This was a charge once made against Lady Caroline, who, it was said, obtained a political secret from one of her admirers, who was a member of the ministry of Sir Robert Peel, and disclosed it to the editor of the *Times*.

Henry Reeve in his memoirs fully exculpates

Lady Caroline from this accusation, and it is now well settled that the so-called secret was obtained by the *Times* through a different channel.

Meredith has also disclaimed that Lady Caroline was the prototype of his heroine, but there are undoubted resemblances.

ARTHUR HELPS.

(1819–1875.)

"I SHOULD be very sorry," writes John Ruskin in the appendix to the third volume of "Modern Painters," "if I had not been continually taught and influenced by the writers whom I love; and am quite unable to say to what extent my thoughts have been guided by Wordsworth, Carlyle and Helps, to whom (with Dante and George Herbert in olden time) I owe more than to any other writers." And again he says: "There are things which I hope are said more clearly and simply than before, owing to the influence upon me of the beautiful, quiet English of Helps."

Praise from such a quarter is praise indeed, and makes it well worth any reader's time to study for himself the works of him whom so great a writer as Ruskin calls one of his masters.

Arthur Helps was born in England in the year 1819 and died in 1875. His life was uneventful. Literature was not his profession, but his leisure was spent among books, and he had intense de-

light in writing. After holding various stations he became clerk of the Privy Council, and his official duties brought him near the Queen and gave him intimate relations with the great men of all parties. He acquired consequently a large knowledge of public affairs, and had he entered upon parliamentary life would have reached great eminence as a statesman.

He chose to be a philanthropist and all his writings have a purpose. His heart was full of love for man, and he desired to make him better. Next to his love of man was his love of books.

His writings are numerous and comprise a history, many volumes of essays—most of them interspersed with dialogue—three or four dramas, as many fictions and a biography. During his life he had many readers in England and at the time of his death his popularity was rapidly growing in this country. In recent years he has gone somewhat out of fashion, but no one can read the most insignificant of his writings without being fascinated with the beauty of his style and impressed by the weight of his thought.

The works by which he is best known are "Friends in Council," "Companions of My Solitude," and "Realmah." These peculiarly exhibit his originality of style and thought. His

diction is idiomatic, rhythmic, graceful, aphoristic —full of sharp and fascinating turns of imagery —with gleams of humor and quiet irony. His choice of words and epithets is exquisite, and his felicities of expression endless. The praise that Johnson gave to Addison is not too great for these writings, and might well be amended to read : Whoever wishes to attain an English style familiar, but not coarse, and elegant, but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Arthur Helps. " Friends in Council " purports to be edited by an old clergyman named Dunsford, who meets to pass summer evenings with two old college pupils, Ellesmere, a lawyer, and Milverton, a writer and politician. There is a page or two of introduction, informing the reader of what is necessary to know concerning these " Friends," and then Milverton reads an essay. This is followed by a discussion of the subject and merits of the essay. These conversations form a very agreeable portion of the work and show a fine mastery of the art of dialogue. They are exactly like the discourse of intelligent and educated men and exhibit the characteristics of the individual speakers ; the robust and vigorous intellect of Ellesmere ; the benevolence and wisdom of Milverton, and the sweet, mild temper

of Dunsford. Later in the work other characters are introduced, notably two young ladies, Mildred and Blanche, one of whom afterward becomes Lady Ellesmere and the other Mrs. Milverton.

The essays embrace a wide range of topics, from "Slavery" and "War" to "Worry," "Pleasantness," and the "Art of Self-Advancement." This last purports to be written by Ellesmere, and abounds in graceful humor and irony.

These friends appear in nearly all of Helps' works, discussing various subjects and criticising or commenting on the writings of Milverton. The reader soon comes to know them and delight in their "good talk." They are as real as any characters ever drawn by any writer, and it is probably the fact that they had their counterparts in real life. Milverton was, of course, Helps himself.

In "Companions of My Solitude" certain of the social problems of the time are discussed in essays and conversations between the friends. Something of the scope of the discussions may be understood from the following passage:

A daughter has left her home, madly, ever so wickedly if you like; but what are too often the demons tempting her onward and preventing her return? The uncharitable

speeches she has heard at home, and the feeling she shares with most of us that those we have lived with are the sharpest judges of our conduct.

"Would you then," exclaims some reader or hearer, "take back and receive with tenderness a daughter who had erred?" "Yes," I reply, "if she had been the most abandoned woman upon earth."

The most striking part of this charming work is the touching story of Gretchen, a poor German maiden, told by Sir John Ellesmere. He had met her when on his travels in Germany. She was poor and an orphan, had been out to service and had not been paid the pittance that was due, and was destitute. Ellesmere relieved her necessities and fell in love with her, for she was a thoughtful and refined girl, but she already had a lover, "a poor man and far away." The words, her benefactor said, in which she told him this went down like a weight into his heart, which never was quite lifted off again. He saw her more than once again, and he declares that she had one of the best intellects and most beautiful natures he had ever seen. Afterward he contrived to assist both her and her lover, and he finally saw them happily married.

Sir Arthur Helps—he was made a baronet a year or two before his death—is at his best in the story of "Realmah." This is a novel with a purpose, and is intended to show that nations

ought to practise the principles of the Christian religion as well as individuals. The friends, except poor old Dunsford, who is dead, meet at Milverton's country seat, and the novel is read by Milverton in chapters, and criticised by the hearers, while a large number of social and literary topics are also discussed. The circle of friends has been somewhat widened, and embraces Cranmer, an exact but prosy official, Mauleverer, a cynic, and one or two others, but Ellesmere remains the chief and most interesting spokesman. The conversations between these persons are better than the story, excellent and original as that is. In one place they discourse on writing and the structure of sentences, and Ellesmere is asked to define what a weighty sentence should be. He replies:

It should be powerful in its substantives, choice and discreet in its adjectives, nicely correct in its verbs; not a word that could be added, nor one which the most fastidious would venture to suppress; in order lucid, in sequence logical, in method perspicuous; and yet with a pleasant and inviting intricacy which disappears as you advance in the sentence; the language throughout not quaint, not obsolete, not common, and not new; its several clauses justly proportioned and carefully balanced, so that it moves like a well disciplined army organized for conquest; the rhythm not that of music but of a higher and more fantastic melodiousness, submitting to no rule, incapable of being taught; the

substance and the form alike disclosing a happy union of the soul of the author to the subject of his thought; having, therefore, individuality without personal predominance; and, withal, there must be a sense of felicity about it, declaring it to be the product of a happy moment, so that you feel that it will not happen again to that man who writes the sentence, or to any other of the sons of men, to say the like thing so choicely, tersely, mellifluously and completely.

This sentence illustrates, as well as defines, a weighty sentence.

The conversations abound in good things, anecdotes, stories, fables, maxims, and proverbs. They are the best talk of accomplished and refined ladies and gentlemen on the most interesting topics, and are excellent models for young people who are sometimes embarrassed in company for want of something to say. We have no hesitation in saying that a person who will carefully study these conversations and has the intelligence to profit by them, cannot become other than a fine conversationalist.

Few writers have been so versatile or have treated upon so many subjects as Sir Arthur Helps, always with thoughtfulness and never without grace. On all those questions which are called women's questions he was in advance of his time. No more ardent admirer of woman ever wrote or spoke, and his writings breathe a tender-

ness and regard for her not often seen. He is both appreciative and chivalrous, and he places her intellectually on the same plane with men. The sixth, seventh and eighth chapters of "Companions of My Solitude" are full of wisdom and tenderness on the greatest of social problems. Helps does not idealize woman. He makes her his companion and friend.

No one can read the works of this charming, thoughtful and subtle writer without great gain. They are full of worldly wisdom and of elevating and ennobling thought. They should be in every household where books are cherished and read.

RUSKIN'S "MODERN PAINTERS."

In 1843 there was published in England a volume entitled "Modern Painters," by a "Graduate of Oxford." It was in the main not a criticism but an appreciation of the works of J. M. W. Turner, who had been for more than fifty years an academician and member of the Royal Academy. Turner had not been a neglected painter, but had achieved considerable distinction, though he was by no means considered the greatest of modern landscape painters. It is not exact, therefore, to say, as is sometimes said, that Ruskin "discovered" Turner, but what he did do was to blow Turner's trumpet and to proclaim him, from Dan to Beersheba, as the greatest of English landscape painters. He magnified his works and made it appear as if Turner was charged with a special mission to the world to elevate mankind and exemplify the divine beauty of art.

This apotheosis of Turner, by the Graduate of Oxford, who was no other than John Ruskin,

aged twenty-four, excited a considerable storm in the world of art, and particularly among those hostile to the Preraphael brotherhood, which was commencing about that time, and of which Ruskin seemed to be the apostle. But Ruskin wrote in such glowing terms, and his criticisms were so incontrovertible, that in less than ten years after "Modern Painters" was published its author was acknowledged as the one apostolic critic of art. Turner was the one accepted landscape painter of the modern world, and Ruskin was his prophet.

Ruskin brought art into fashion in the English-speaking world and was the first to teach his countrymen what they should enjoy and why. He instilled into them the love of art and elevated and ennobled their minds by depicting for them the wondrous works of human genius on the one hand and the wondrous works of nature on the other. With a gift of expression that has seldom been equaled, and never surpassed, he showed forth the perennial beauties of architecture, sculpture and painting as they may be seen in Venice, in Florence and in Rome and joined with them the still grander manifestations of nature as seen in the Alps, the Jura, the lordly Rhine and the rolling sea.

Forty and fifty years ago this resplendent rhetoric, clothing as with a garment an appeal to the common intelligence of man, carried conviction wherever it was heard or known, and Ruskin became at once the idolized teacher of the day. As the successive volumes of "Modern Painters" came out each was hailed with a greater acclaim than its predecessor, and when the fifth and final volume was given to the world in 1860, by common consent, so far, at least, as the English-speaking world was concerned, Ruskin was seated in the most authentic chair of art criticism. How he fell from there will be shown later, but for at least a decade and a half, if not a few years longer, his position as teacher and critic was almost universally recognized, though assailed in some quarters. His opinion became the law, and to have Ruskin's support for any theory was to resolve that theory into accepted doctrine.

"Modern Painters" is, and was intended to be, the exploitation of Turner and his art. It might be called the "Turneriad." Turner was an old man when Ruskin first commenced to write about him, and he died in 1851 at the age of seventy-six, but the work went on for nearly ten years longer. Turner himself said of Ruskin's appreciations of his art that "he knows a great deal

more about my pictures than I do. He puts things into my head, and points out meanings in them that I never intended." Undoubtedly Turner was one of the greatest, if not the very greatest, of English landscape painters, but it is one of the incomprehensible phases of human nature how a man of pure and elevated mind like Ruskin could in any degree tolerate a man such as Turner notoriously was. Ruskin, in all his works, and more particularly in "Modern Painters," is constantly preaching to his readers purity of thought, nobility of soul and charity to all men. Turner was the grossest and most sensual of men, and an incorrigible miser. He loved his art with passionate intenseness, but he loved with even a greater passion the money it brought him. Every sketch, every drawing, every perfected work had its money value to him, and he rarely if ever gave away the slightest work of his hands. There is little or no record of the least generosity on his part during his long life toward any one. A few spasmodic acts of kindness are recorded of him, but they proceeded from whim rather than from native goodness. He was a hard, miserly, solitary man, never married, inhospitable, living in mysterious places, and often under an assumed name. He owned a house in

Queen Anne street, but it was black with dirt and terribly out of repair. It is doubtful if any one ever saw the inside of his studio—certainly no rival artist ever saw him use his pencil. He was as mysterious about his methods in art as a conjurer.

How such a person, so sordid and so low, living in squalor, and taking pleasure at times in the lowest forms of vice and dissipation, could have accomplished such greatness in art is another of the mysteries pertaining to that complex microcosm called man. Morally he was one of the most imperfect of human beings, and yet he was a nearly perfect artist. To his transcendent natural gifts as a painter he added the most strenuous labor and industry. He possessed a marvelous eye for color, which was also Titian's gift. Mr. Ruskin writes: "Other painters had rendered the golden tones and blue tones of the sky; Titian especially the latter in perfection. But none had dared to paint—none seems to have seen—the scarlet and the purple." And at another place he says that in representing the glare of sunlight Turner surpassed even Claude. But the intense color of his pictures did not always please the critics, and Thackeray, in one of his critical reviews of the Royal Academy exhibition, while praising in

the highest terms the "Fighting Temeraire" of Turner, says that some of his other performances are quite incomprehensible to him, "since he has forsaken nature, or attempted (like your French barbers) to embellish it."

O ye gods! Why will he not stick to copying her majestical countenance, instead of daubing it with some absurd antics and fard of his own? Fancy pea-green skies, crimsonlike trees and orange and purple grass—fancy cataracts, rainbows, suns, moons and thunderbolts—shake them well up, with a quantity of gamboge; and you will have an idea of a fancy picture by Turner. It is worth a shilling alone to go and see "Pluto and Proserpina." Such a landscape! such figures such a little red-hot coal-scuttle of a chariot! As Nat Lee sings:

> "Methought I saw a hieroglyphic bat
> Skim o'er the surface of a slipshod hat;
> While to increase the tumult of the skies,
> A damned potato o'er the whirlwind flies."

If you can understand these lines you can understand one of Turner's landscapes.

In another article he satirically speaks of Turner as, "a great and awful mystery."

But it is worth everybody's while to read "Modern Painters," no matter whether or no one agrees with Mr. Ruskin about Turner's supernal excellence. We can all agree about the charm and beauty of Mr. Ruskin's prose.

RUSKIN,

AS POLITICAL ECONOMIST.

Mr. Ruskin's "Modern Painters," "Stones of Venice" and "Seven Lamps of Architecture" did much to establish true canons of art in painting and architecture. The English world was educated not only as to what they should admire, but why they should admire it, and it was just in the condition when it most sadly needed the instruction. After some hesitation and protest Ruskin was accepted as the one chief critic and teacher of the day, despite some apparent oddities and crankeries in his conclusions. He had formulated his opinions so splendidly that his rhetoric convinced where his logic did not, and for well-nigh twenty years he sat in the highest seat of art criticism.

Then two things happened, both of which have been consolidated under the term Ruskinism. The first of these was that having been elected to the chair of criticism, he assumed a dictatorship.

His word was to be the law. The second thing was that having achieved so great a success in the domain of art, he thought that every other field of human endeavor and industry became his province. He began to write and speak on sociology and political economy, not as the scribes, but as one having authority. The result was that he was turned upon and derided, his judgment even in the things he so well knew was disabled, and the chair in which he had been seated by acclaim was taken away from him. It is not impossible that he will be again seated in that chair and be placed on a higher platform than before, but for the present and for a quarter of a century past he is and has been discredited both as critic and prophet.

It was in the autumn of 1859 that Ruskin wrote the series of lectures or essays which have since been published under the title of "Unto This Last." They were the outcome of his reflections on the labor strikes then occurring in England. Thackeray was at that time engaged in launching the *Cornhill Magazine*, and in search for striking contributions, accepted these essays, from Mr. Ruskin. Their publication excited no end of condemnation in England, and after the first three had appeared Thackeray wrote to Rus-

kin saying that he could publish but one more, giving as his reason the general hostility to them of the reading public.

In his preface to the published volume Mr. Ruskin says that when published in the *Cornhill* "they were reprobated in a violent manner by most of the readers they met with. Not a whit the less," he goes on to say, "I believe them to be the best—that is to say, the truest, rightest-worded and most serviceable—things I have ever written; and the last of them, having had especial pains spent on it, is probably the best I shall ever write."

This, then, is the volume that became the turning point in Mr. Ruskin's career. A number of years had to elapse ere he was entirely dethroned, but the beginning of it all may be traced back to the publication of "Unto This Last" and Mr. Ruskin's challenge in the preface, that it was the best thing he had written and that thenceforth he would do battle for the principles he had laid down.

Certainly a more remarkable spectacle than Mr. Ruskin fighting for what he deemed the right, against a people blinded, in his estimation, to their own most vital interests, has rarely been seen. Ajax defying the lightning is the nearest

approach to it in mythical history, and in impuissance comes nearest to it in fact.

"Unto This Last" undertook to elevate political economy from the region of the "dismal" to which Carlyle had assigned it into the region of imagination and ideality. It was not what is, but what ought to be, that Mr. Ruskin dealt with, and not so much what ought to be as what he thought ought to be, and upon this there was a wide difference of opinion. Political economy if it deals with anything deals with the realm of selfishness; in other words, with human nature as it is. This is really what makes it so "dismal," and upon the whole incomprehensible.

Mr. Ruskin, in his aspiration to lead the world into a higher and better life, taught that the proper theory of political economy was unselfishness and he would have it extended so as to include politics, education and police regulations.

In the old definition political economy was concerned only with material things, and commodities were wealth. Mr. Ruskin would have it that life is wealth and that ethics have as much to do with the science as material objects. Mr. Ruskin would construct an ideal monarchy just as Plato imagined an ideal republic, in which the king or the government would be a providence

watching over and controlling all the people who, in a measure, would reside in the " happy valley." The name " Altruria " had not been invented for this ideal state of existence when Mr. Ruskin wrote, but that is the condition he aimed at in his writings on political economy.

From the time of the publication of " Unto This Last " down to the period of his retirement from all controversy, Mr. Ruskin continued the battle for his pet theories, and it is in the papers he entitled " Fors Clavigera " that their best expression is to be found. This fanciful title means, according to his own definition, fortitude, fortune or force, bearing a club or a key. It is a series of letters addressed to workingmen, little read by them possibly as being, like the title, far over their heads, but worthy to be read by everybody, not for their argument, but for their superb English. They were published in periodical form and ran for several years. The work in effect is a criticism on modern life in England, and contains some of the most trenchant satire ever written, interspersed with the profoundest pathos and eloquence, while there is vast research into the meaning of words and things. It contains Mr. Ruskin's fullest and most mature teachings, and while they cannot be accepted in the present state of

the world, the day may come when mankind will gladly take them from one who, long neglected, may yet rise again to be the leader and prophet of a nobler humanity.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

(1828–1882.)

Dante Gabriel Rosetti was one of the most remarkable men of the Victorian period of literature. Gabriel Charles Dante Rossetti, who in later life modified his several names into Dante Gabriel Rossetti, was the founder of the famous Preraphaelite brotherhood and its apostle for many years, though Ruskin was its chief spokesman and most eloquent expounder. They all tired of it in time.

Rossetti was born in London, May 12, 1828, and in blood was three-fourths Italian and one-fourth English, his father being an Italian and his mother half Italian and half English.

He early developed both literary and artistic tastes, and became both poet and painter, showing great genius for both. It is as a poet, however, we are to deal with him here, and as a poet he is entitled to a high rank among his contemporaries. No one can say that in beauty of language or in

vividness of imagination he surpassed Tennyson, or perhaps Browning, but that he was one of the most superb masters of poetry of any age no one will gainsay. His verse is radiant with beauty. No person can read "The Blessed Damozel" without being deeply impressed with the power of Rossetti's genius. This was one of the first of his poems, and long before it was published it was passed around in manuscript and established Rossetti's fame as a poet among his friends. It is now not only his best, but probably his best-known poem :

The blessed damozel leaned out
  On the gold bar of heaven ;
Her eyes were stiller than the depths
  Of waters still'd at even ;
She had five lilies in her hand,
  And the stars in her hair were seven !

Her robes, ungirt from clasp to hem,
  No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
  For service meetly worn ;
Her hair that lay along her back
  Was yellow like ripe corn.

Certainly a more beautiful and more sensuous picture was never sketched as in this exquisite poem. Pathos also there is, as when the blessed

damozel from "the fixed place of heaven" looks down:

> And then she cast her arms along
> The golden barriers,
> And laid her face between her hands
> And wept. (I heard her tears.)

"I heard her tears!" Could anything be more deeply imaginative or more spiritual?

The most finished of Rossetti's poems is that series which he calls "The House of Life," "a sonnet sequence" containing the story of his love and of all loves. It is a marvelous recital of the poet's love that will hold the reader enthralled by their poetic power and beauty, and yet there is no story in them.

Swinburne in his poetic prose has written of these sonnets in language that cannot be improved:

> Their golden affluence of images and jewel-colored words never once disguises the firm outline, the justice and chastity of form. No nakedness could be more harmonious, more consummate in its fleshly sculpture than the imperial array and ornament of this august poetry. Mailed in gold as of the morning and girdled with gems of strange water, the beautiful body as of a carven goddess gleams through them tangible and taintless, without spot or default. There is not a jewel here but it fits, not a beauty but it subserves an end.

It is impossible to add anything to praise so well expressed and so just.

No one until he has read these sensuous sonnets can know the majesty, melody, emotion and loveliness of our language. Rossetti has sounded depths of meaning in our tongue that approaches Shakespeare, and by that token is worthy of remembrance. One cannot quote these sonnets so as to represent the poet faithfully. All must be read together. The radiant "Portrait," the gracious and joyous "Love Letter," the tender "Birthday Bond," the fervent "Day of Love," the delicate "Love's Bauble," the spiritual "The Love-Moon" and the varied beauty of "Broken Music" and "Death-in-Love" must all be taken as a whole and as one poem, as in fact, they are intended to be. Where in all poetry is there a deeper expression of the mere littleness of human life and of its helplessness than in the following:

Is it this sky's vast vault or ocean's sound
  That is Life's self and draws my life from me,
  And by instinct ineffable decree
Holds my breath quailing on the bitter bound?
Nay, is it life or death, thus thunder crown'd,
  That 'mid the tide of all emergency,
  Now notes my separate wave, and to what sea
Its difficult eddies labor in the ground?
  Oh, what is this that knows the road I came,
  The flame-turned cloud, the cloud returned to flame,

The lifted shifted steeps and all the way?
That draws round me at last this wind-warm space,
And in regenerate rapture turns my face
Upon the devious coverts of dismay?

Shelley himself has never expressed the mighty heart of music more exquisitely than Rossetti has done here.

Rossetti's lyrics all have a superb and musical quality, words that almost sing themselves. "The Song of the Bower" is full of passion and music, and the lines linger in the ear like the whispering of sea shells.

Say, is it day, is it dusk in thy bower,
Thou whom I long for, who longest for me?
Oh, be it light, be it night, 'tis Love's hour,
Love's that is fettered as Love's that is free.

How replete with passion and color the whole poem is! It appeals to the heart and memory of almost every reader.

We cannot describe fully for want of space some of the more passionate of these poems, such as "Jenny," "Sister Helen" and "Eden Bower," They are terrible in their tragical power and effect, unmatched for pathos and beauty, they are indeed masterpieces. One sonnet, however, must be recalled, so full is it of serene beauty and pathos. It is entitled "Raleigh's Cell in the Tower":

Here writ was the World's History by his hand
Whose steps knew all the earth, albeit his world
In these few piteous paces then was furled,
Here daily, hourly, have his proud feet spanned
This smaller speck than the receding land
Had ever shown his ships, what time he hurled
Abroad o'er new found regions spiced and pearled
His country's high dominion and command.
Here dwelt two spheres. The vast terrestrial zone
His spirit traversed ; and that spirit was
Itself a zone celestial, round whose birth
The planet played within the zodiac's girth ;
Till hence, through unjust death unfeared, did pass
His spirit to the only land unknown.

How superb the lines "Till hence, through unjust death unfeared, did pass his spirit to the only land unknown."

Rossetti was one of the leaders of men—a poet-painter, a painter-poet. His poems will long preserve his memory in English literature.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

(1834–1896.)

THE biography of William Morris, by J. W. Mackall, is an intensely interesting story of a very remarkable man, poet, artist, architect and master workman, a man whose sense of beauty in things around him was the greatest characteristic of his nature. As the biographer says :

Morris did not graduate as a professional architect, nor in all his life did he ever build a house. But for him then and always the word architecture bore an immense, and one might also say a transcendental, meaning. Connected at a thousand points with all the other specific arts which ministered to it out of a thousand sources, it was in itself the tangible expression of all the order, the comeliness, the sweetness, nay, even the mystery and the law, which sustain man's world and make human life what it is. To him the House Beautiful represented the visible form of life itself. Not only as a craftsman and manufacturer, a worker in dyed stuffs and textiles and glass, a pattern designer and decorator, but throughout the whole range of life, he was from first to last the architect, the master craftsman, whose

range of work was so phenomenal and his sudden transitions from one to another form of productive energy so swift and perplexing, because, himself secure in the center, he struck outward to any point of the circumference with equal directness, with equal precision, unperplexed by artificial subdivisons of art and untrammeled by any limiting rules of professional custom.

In other words, Morris felt and illustrated in his life that all the arts are united and are so many means of expressing the sense of beauty. "If a chap cannot write an epic poem while he is weaving tapestry," Morris would say, "he had better shut up; he'll never do any good at all."

William Morris was born March 24, 1834, his father being a prosperous banker in London of Welsh descent. He was educated at a private school and at Exeter College, Oxford, though he did not take a degree. His most intimate associate at college was Edward Burne-Jones, and they continued to be lifelong friends. "From the first," Burne-Jones has written, "I knew how different he was from all the men I had ever met. He talked with vehemence, and sometimes with violence. I never knew him languid or tired. He was slight of figure in those days; his hair was dark brown and very thick; his nose was straight; his eyes hazel colored; his mouth exceedingly delicate and beautiful."

Another college friend thus describes him :

At first Morris was regarded by the Pembroke men simply as a very pleasant boy (the least of us was senior by a term to him) who was fond of talking, which he did in a husky shout, and fond of going down the river with Faulkner, who was a good boating man. He was very fond of sailing a boat. He was also extremely fond of singlestick and a good fencer. In no long time, however, the great characters of his nature began to impress us. His fire and impetuosity, great bodily strength and high temper were soon manifested, and were something astonishing. As e. g. his habit of beating his own head, dealing himself vigorous blows, to take it out of himself. I think it was he who brought in singlestick. But his mental qualities, his intellect, also began to be perceived and acknowledged. . . . One night Crom Price and I went to Exeter and found him with Burne-Jones. As soon as we entered the room Burne-Jones exclaimed wildly: "He's a big poet." "Who is ?" asked we, "Why, Topsy," the name which he had given him. This name, given from his mass of dark curly hair and generally unkempt appearance,stuck to Morris among the circle of his intimate friends all his life. It was frequently shortened into "Top."

We sat down and heard Morris read his first poem, the first that he had ever written in his life.

This poem was at once acknowledged by Morris' friends to be remarkable for its originality, and they all expressed the greatest admiration, upon which Morris remarked: "Well, if this is poetry, it is very easy to write."

When Morris first went to the university it was his expectation and that of his family that he was to be educated for the Church, but as time passed he found that vocation alien to his inclination, and he determined to be an architect. His father dying, he was left a fortune of nine hundred pounds a year, so that he was independent to choose as he pleased. In telling of his change of plans he wrote a long and affectionate letter to his mother, in which he says :

I suppose you think that you have, as it were, thrown away money on my kind of apprenticeship for the ministry ; let your mind be easy on this score ; for, in the first place, an university education fits a man about as much for being a ship captain as a pastor of souls ; besides, your money has by no means been thrown away, if the love of friends faithful and true, friends first seen and loved here ; if this love is something priceless and not to be bought again anywhere and by any means ; if, moreover, by living here and seeing evil and sin in its foulest and coarsest forms, as one does day by day, I have learned to hate any form of sin, and to wish to fight against it, is this not well, too ?

Morris entered an architect's office in Oxford and pursued his studies for several years, meantime removing to London, where he and Burne-Jones came under the influence of Rossetti for a time. Morris also commenced to paint and to design, and in 1859 married Miss Jane Burden,

a wonderfully beautiful girl. He was now fully launched on his career. In 1861, in company with a few other artists, among them Rossetti, he established a firm for the purpose of engaging in decoration, carving as applied to architecture, stained glass, metal work and figure and pattern painting. It was not a prosperous concern financially, and after a few years Morris was obliged to take the whole thing under his own management. The final result was the establishment of the Kelmscott Press and manufactory, which came to have a world-wide reputation.

It was in 1867 that his first great poem, "The Life and Death of Jason," was published, and Morris at once became one of the popular poets, contesting the palm even with Tennyson. There was a refinement and charm in the poem, combined with romanticism, movement and incident, that hit the popular as well as the cultivated taste of the day. After this came his still greater poem, "The Earthly Paradise," which by many critics was said to place him on a level with Tennyson and Browning. Certainly it established his reputation as a very great poet. His third book, "The House of the Wolfings," a mixture of prose and verse, appeared in 1889 and still further increased his reputation. Of his other

works "The News From Nowhere" is probably the best known, written by him after he became interested in socialism. It was not much more than a theoretical interest after all, but it had a tendency to make many people look askance at Morris and wonder if he was quite right in his mind, and it probably took away something from his popularity, but this did not bother him in the least. He joined the Social Democratic Federation in 1883, but left it two years later, unable to work with the doctrinaire followers of Karl Marx. After all he had but little in common with the promotion of socialistic theories, though he strove hard to get in touch with humanity, not an easy thing for him to do. It was his natural state to be out of touch with many of the people about him.

Mr. Mackall compares him in many of his peculiarities with Dr. Johnson. Mr. Morris was large in person, slovenly in his personal appearance, loving paradox and full of the spirit of contradiction. Like Johnson, he prided himself on being a very polite man, and was capable of the most amazing and almost supernatural rudeness both to men and women. Unlike Johnson, he could use the vocabulary of a sea captain when things did not go exactly to suit him.

But he was a many-sided and very great man, who in his lifetime did a marvelous amount of work. In fact he wore himself out by hard work and died in 1896 in his sixty-third year.

EDWARD FITZGERALD,

TRANSLATOR OF OMAR KHAYYAM.

(1809-1883.)

HITHERTO "The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam" has not been for the multitude, but rather, like Browning's poems, the special cult of a select few. Clubs and coteries are formed for the study of the "Quatrains," which FitzGerald has so exquisitely dressed in English that that language seems to be their native garb. But it is evident that the admiration and appreciation of this superb poem is growing. Omar is now joined with Keats and Shelley and Wordsworth and ever so many other British worthies in the Golden Treasury Series, which is very good company—far better than at one time was thought possible. It is forty years since "The Rubaiyat" quatrains were translated from the Persian and given to the English-speaking world by Edward FitzGerald. Had he translated them into Choctaw his book could not have met with a colder

reception. It was neither noticed by the reviews nor sold by the booksellers. It excited no interest, and even "Old Fitz's" warmest friends, men like Thackeray and Tennyson, could find but few words of compliment. Copies of that edition are now worth their weight in gold, and not readily obtainable at that.

Nevertheless FitzGerald still had confidence that his poem would find its way, and published editions of it in 1868, 1872, 1878 and 1879; but he died a few years later, in 1883, without having received much appreciation from the world. It was not until about 1884, with the publication of an American edition of "The Rubaiyat," illustrated by drawings of Elihu Vedder, that the poem began to attract attention. From that day it has grown in favor, until now we see it in an edition that may justly be termed popular.

The beauty and grace of FitzGerald's translation of Omar's poem are so striking that it always has been a question whether after all it is not an original poem by the Englishman. There are those who think that FitzGerald, and not Omar the Tentmaker, should be the name most prominent on the title-page, and that it is altogether improbable that a man could have lived nine hundred years ago in the far-off Vale of Cashmere, and under the

hanging gardens of Babylon, who was so accomplished in the arts of the world, had such an insight of life and was so disillusioned in respect to the world as the author of this poem undoubtedly was.

But the most liberal translation of "The Rubaiyat" gives the same impression of Omar, and there is no question that FitzGerald put in memorable verse what Omar had thought and written centuries and centuries ago. It only shows that man in that narrow Persian world of the twelfth century was precisely the same as he is in the wider world of the nineteenth century. The Persian singer of wine and love and philosophy was an occidental as well as an oriental, and spoke to the universal heart of man. With the same serenity of mind that Solomon exhibited, Omar looks upon the problems of life and death, sees that they are insoluble and proposes to make the best of it.

> And fear not lest Existence, closing your
> Account, and mine, should know the like no more:
> The Eternal Saki from that Bowl has poured
> Millions of Bubbles like us, and will pour.

Readers of Tennyson's memoirs, and of Mrs Ritchie's biography of her father, are familiar with the name of Edward FitzGerald. He was at

Cambridge University with Tennyson and Thackeray, and remained their lifelong friend and correspondent. "Old Fitz," as he was affectionately called by his intimate friends, was by nature and habit a recluse, and only at rare intervals mingled in society or visited his acquaintances in London. And yet he kept a keen eye upon the literary progress of his friends, and his letters to Thackerary and Tennyson show what a kindly pride he took in their successes and growing fame.

The greater part of his life was spent at his home in the English village of Woodbridge, where he lived among his books. One singular episode in his career was his marriage. He was the friend of the Quaker poet, Bernard Barton, who had been Charles Lamb's friend. When Mr. Barton died he left Fitz Gerald the executor of his estate and the guardian of his daughter Lucy. The estate proved inadequate, and FitzGerald, not knowing what else to do, chivalrously offered his hand to his ward, which was accepted. It proved an uncongenial match, and in a short time husband and wife separated, never again to meet. FitzGerald was too much of a solitary, and too fond of his books, to have a wife. Needless to say that he provided for all her wants. She survived him many years.

He does not seem to have done much original work, unless, indeed, his translation of Omar's splendid poem may be called original. He translated the Agamemnon of Aeschylus and some of the plays of Calderon, but nothing else that he did has had the fame of "The Rubaiyat."

RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES.

(1809–1885.)

Richard Monckton Milnes—called by his familiars "Dicky Milnes," and known in his later life as Lord Houghton, was a man well worth knowing when he lived, and whose biography by T. Wemyss Reid is one of the most delightful of books. Poet, politician, and man of the world, he knew everybody and everybody knew him. He was at home in every capital of Europe and America and in a long lifetime he made many friends and not a single enemy. He possessed the friendship of Carlyle, Thackeray, Tennyson, Gladstone, Browning, Macaulay, Sydney Smith, Walter Savage Landor, Frederick Maurice, Fanny Kemble, and a hundred others of like eminence. He had the sunniest of natures and even Carlyle, who really liked him, could find nothing unpleasant to say about him.

He was born in 1809 in Yorkshire, where his

father had large estates, and was educated at Cambridge. At the university he had for friends and classmates, Tennyson, Bulwer, Thackeray, Spedding, Trench, Brookfield, Edward FitzGerald and others, and all these were his lifelong friends. He inherited great wealth and was for many years a member of parliament. Later he was raised to the peerage as Lord Houghton. He died in 1885 at the age of seventy-six.

Walter Savage Landor thought Milnes was the greatest poet then living in England, but this was before Tennyson and Browning had made their way. Great poet he was not, but he was a charming lyrist, whose verses had considerable vogue, and some of them are still remembered. His first book was "Memorials of a Tour in Greece," printed in 1834, and this was followed by "Memorials and Historical Poems," and "Poems of Many Years," in 1838, and "Poetry for the People" in 1840. Two of his most famous poems are "The Brookside" and "Strangers Yet," both of which have been set to music and long been favorites. The latter has always been and always will be greatly admired.

Strangers yet!
After strife of common ends,
After title of old friends,

After passions fierce and tender,
After cheerful self-surrender,
Hearts may beat and eyes be met,
And the souls be strangers yet.

Strangers yet!
Oh, the bitter thought to scan
All the loneliness of man,
Nature by magnetic laws
Circle unto circle draws,
But they only touch when met,
Never mingle—strangers yet.

He wrote the following on the death of Thackeray:

O gentle Censor of our age,
Prime master of our ampler tongue,
Whose word of wit and generous page
Were never wroth except with wrong.
Fielding without the manner's dross,
Scott with a spirit's larger room,
What prelate deems thy grave his loss—
What Halifax erects thy tomb!
But maybe he who so could draw
The hidden great, the humble wise,
Yielding with them to God's good law,
Makes the Pantheon where he lies.

In 1836, after extensive travels in France, Germany, Italy, and Greece, he returned to London where he made his entrée to society, and as heir to a great estate, and as a poet, he was received with open arms. He took apartments

and gave breakfasts, and he had the faculty of bringing together all kinds of people, who if they were not congenial elsewhere certainly were for the time being when with him. He was a singularly complacent and self-sufficient man, never flustered at anything, so that Sydney Smith gave him the sobriquet of "The cool of the evening." Few celebrities ever visited London without being entertained by Mr. Milnes. Carlyle was once storming away in his usual style about the decadence of humanity and the loss of reverence for great men, and said that if Jesus Christ were to return to earth and come to London nobody would pay him the least attention. Then considering a moment, he added: "Yes, I think Dicky Milnes would ask him to breakfast."

At the entertainments he gave he broke up as far as possible the habit of monologue, and made the conversation general. He brought people together of widely different tastes and made them agreeable. Once he was complaining to Carlyle that Peel had not offered him a post in his cabinet, to which Carlyle replied: "No, no, Peel knows what he is about; there is only one post fit for you, and that is the office of the perpetual president of the Heaven and Hell Amalgamation society."

In a letter to his wife Carlyle describes Milnes' methods of drawing out his guests :

He pricks into you with questions, with remarks, with all kinds of fly tackle, to make you bite—does generally contrive to get you into some sort of speech. And then his good humor is extreme ; you look into his face and forgive him all his tricks.

W. E. Forster draws a similar picture of him :

Monckton Milnes came yesterday and left this morning—a pleasant, companionable little man, well fed and fattening, with some small remnant of poetry in his eyes and nowhere else ; delighting in paradoxes, but good-humored ones ; defending all manner of people and principles, in order to provoke Carlyle to abuse them, in which laudable enterprise he must have succeeded to his heart's content, and for a time we had a most amusing evening, reminding me of a naughty boy rubbing a cat's tail backward and getting in between furious growls and fiery sparks. He managed to avoid the threatened scratches.

I must quote another Carlyle anecdote which is given in the " Life of Lord Tennyson." It was Milnes who persuaded Sir Robert Peel to bestow a pension on Tennyson by inducing the prime minister to read " Ulysses," but it was Carlyle who suggested it :

" Richard Milnes," said Carlyle one day, withdrawing his pipe from his mouth, as they were seated together in the little house in Cheyne Row, " when are you going to get that pension for Alfred Tennyson ? "

"My dear Carlyle," responded Milnes, "the thing is not so easy as you seem to suppose. What will my constituents say if I do get the pension for Tennyson? They know nothing about his poetry, and they will probably think he is some poor relation of my own, and that the whole affair is a job."

"Solemn and emphatic was Carlyle's response. "Richard Milnes, on the Day of Judgment, when the Lord asks you why you didn't get that pension for Alfred Tennyson, it will not do to lay the blame on your constituents; it is you that will be damned."

The pension followed shortly afterward.

In 1876 Lord Houghton visited the United States and was shown a great deal of attention by his American friends, and was lionized in Washington, Richmond, New York, and Boston. In St. Louis he was the guest of General Sherman, and when he visited Chicago he was greatly interested in the public library, to which he had sent a complete set of his works.

On his return home he wrote an article in the *Quarterly Review* urging closer sympathy and relationship between the two nations.

THE BRONTÉ NOVELS

AND THEIR AUTHORS.

THE "Bronté cult" has been more or less of a literary fad for the past half-dozen years, but apart from that there has hardly been a time in two-score years when some one has not been having something to say about Charlotte Bronté and her sisters. "They were and they were not women of genius; they wrote and did not write books that will live in literature; Charlotte was and was not a great novelist;" and so the discussion goes on in an unceasing round and finds "no end in wandering mazes lost." Andrew Lang has no admiration for Charlotte Bronte and thinks her by no means comparable to Miss Austen. On the other hand Mr. Swinburne, Herbert Paul, and many others place her among the great novelists of the Victorian era.

Just now there is a disposition to exalt Emily Bronté's genius above that of the elder sister, and certainly in grim force and weird intensity "Wuthering Heights" is a marvelous story for

a girl to write. Emily died before she was thirty, and what she might have done can only be imagined, but she certainly possessed genius, and her two novels belong to literature.

It is more than half a century since the last of Charlotte Bronté's trilogy of novels was published, "Jane Eyre" appeared in 1847, "Shirley" in 1849, and "Villette" in 1852, and it is only the works of the greatest masters that have survived so well. They are still widely read, and "Jane Eyre" is as familiar to the generality of readers as "Vanity Fair" or "David Copperfield." Not that it equals these masterpieces, but it is a great and abiding story not easily to be forgotten. When it first appeared there were fastidious critics who denounced it as an immoral book, though it is impossible to imagine a higher moral standard than pervades it. Few lives are more pathetic, few examples more elevating, than that of the unhappy heroine, friendless and alone, without a single human being to care what her conduct or her fate may be, who rather than depart from the path of rectitude, leaves the man she loves and the only home she has known and faces starvation and death.

The unhappy Haworth household was never so full of sorrow for Charlotte Bronté as during the

period she was writing "Shirley." She had begun to write it shortly after the publication of "Jane Eyre." It was during a brief visit to London at this time that Miss Brontë revealed to her publisher the secret of the authorship of "Jane Eyre," which had been concealed from him, and informed him that her second novel was well under way.

Upon her return home her brother Bramwell died, ending an existence that had nothing but misery in it for himself and sisters. Then Emily, apparently the most indomitable and strongest of them all, fell a victim to the family scourge, and in three months passed away. Five months later Anne, the youngest sister, followed, and Charlotte was left alone. Intense as was her grief, she now set herself resolutely to finish the novel, and in an imaginary world try to forget the sorrows of the actual.

One must remember these things when reading this powerful novel. The characters are largely drawn from real persons. The heroine, Shirley Keeldar, is her sister Emily, placed in happier surroundings, a most fascinating portraiture.

It is not so powerful a story as "Jane Eyre," but it is fine and strong. Mr. Helstone, the courageous and fighting parson, full of all Tory

virtues, straight as a ramrod, keen as a hawk, hard and tyrannical at times and tender as a woman, also is a wonderfully finely studied portrayal. Martin Yorke, the hard, queer, clever, parson-hating radical gentleman of good estate; the benevolent Cyril Hall, and the two brothers, Robert and Louis Moore, the heroes of the novel, all possess a most vivid and truthful appearance and cleave to the memory with more distinctness than the characters in many modern novels.

Miss Bronté was never quite sure about her success with her men characters. "When I write about women," she once said, "I am sure of my ground—in the other case I am not so sure." She had seen very little of society, and had known but little of men, and her imagination was not adequate to supply the defects of experience.

"Villette" the third novel, is placed by some of the critics, Mr. Swinburne among them, as the best of the three, and it is the most realistic. Lik the others, it contains scenes and characters drawn from the experiences of Charlotte and Emily when at Brussels, where they had spent two years in preparing themselves to be governesses. Villette is Brussels, and M. Paul, the professor of literature, the hero, is an idealized por-

trait of M. Heger, the principal under whom the girls had studied.

Lucy Snowe, the heroine, who relates the story, is Jane Eyre over again, the plain-looking conscientious girl who has her own way to make in life against the greatest odds. She passes a few happy months at Bretton, an old-fashioned English town, with her godmother, Mrs. Bretton, a widow with an only son, now sixteen years of age. Lucy is fourteen, and while visiting at Bretton, a new arrival comes, little Polly, or Paulina, a child of six. The interest of the life at Bretton centers in this child, who is the daughter of Mr. Home, a Scotch gentleman, now a widower. Mr. Home is about to travel and leaves Paulina to be cared for by Mrs. Bretton. John Bretton and Paulina become great friends, though John is sometimes careless and thoughtless in his treatment of her, and the child is a wonderfully self-reliant and independent little thing.

The life at Bretton is the prelude to the story, and then the household is scattered. Paulina is taken to her father, Lucy returns to her kinsfolk. and Mrs. Bretton and her son leave their home to enter upon other scenes and struggles, their fortune being lost. Eight years pass and Lucy, obliged to earn her own living, becomes compan-

ion to Miss Marchmont, an old maiden lady, a rheumatic cripple, impotent in foot and hand, and had been so for twenty years. This was an arduous service, though it did not last very long, for the old lady died one night, after relating to Lucy the pathetic story of her life and the death of her lover.

Then the scene shifts to Brussels and the pensionnat and the interest centers there.

It is a narrow stage, but the drama enacted is replete with life and action and poetry. All the great passions of the human heart, love, jealousy, hatred, and envy, are depicted, and there are many great and brilliant scenes. The earlier characters of the novel, the Brettons, Paulina, and Mr. Home, again appear and enter into Lucy's life. Some of the portraitures are very vivid and real, and few characters in fiction are better drawn than M. Paul, Mme. Beck, and Ginevra Fanshawe, while Dr. John, Mrs. Bretton, and the exquisite Paulina are admirably conceived. One of the superb passages in the novel describes the acting of Rachel, the great tragic actress, whom Miss Bronté had seen in one of her visits to London. Another describes the streets of Villette on a great festival night, and there are many passages of great poetic beauty.

GEORGE ELIOT.

(1819–1880.)

George Eliot has been dead a little more than twenty years, and as yet no woman has arisen to contest her right as the foremost woman novelist in English literature. "Silas Marner" and "Adam Bede," "The Mill on the Floss" and "Felix Holt," "Romola" and "Middlemarch," have as yet no rivals from the pen of any woman, and it may be said with equal truth from the pen of any man, since she passed away. She remains indisputably the first. Her novels are perhaps not read as generally as they were twenty-five years ago, for novel readers are always seeking out some new thing and running after strange fancies; but the place of George Eliot in English literature is as assured as that of any other writer of the Victorian period, and her novels will long remain as pictures of the time in which she lived.

George Eliot has sometimes been called the English counterpart of George Sand; but save in

the respect that both assumed masculine pseudonyms, and both were novel writers, not much of a parallel can be instituted between them. Both formed an irregular marriage relation, to be sure, but in the case of the Englishwoman it was single and permanent, while the brilliant Frenchwoman picked and chose as her fancy led. She never had to be forgiven ; but it was only the commanding genius of George Eliot that at last compelled the austere Britons to forgive the fault of Marian Evans. In the last ten or twelve years of her association with Mr. Lewes she was accepted in high social and literary circles as his wife, which she never was.

In literary productiveness as well as in vivacity of temperament George Sand far surpassed George Eliot. Two hundred volumes of fiction stand to the credit of the Frenchwoman, while in twenty years George Eliot wrote but eight novels. But then the eight are literature and the two hundred are not, though perhaps several of them stand a chance for the twentieth century. George Sand computed that by her novels she had earned a million francs, or two hundred thousand dollars. For "Daniel Deronda" alone George Eliot received forty thousand pounds, or two hundred thousand dollars, while she was

paid almost as much for "Middlemarch," and already had received a very comfortable fortune for her other novels. Neither Scott nor Dickens, by far the best paid of our novelists, was better paid than she, considering the years of labor and amount of production.

George Sand matured early, George Eliot matured late. She was thirty-seven when she commenced novel writing, the "Scenes From Clerical Life" being her first. These stories were sent to *Blackwood* and appeared in 1856, and her great career began. From an obscure sub-editor of an unpopular review she rapidly rose to be the most distinguished woman in English letters. "Silas Marner" ushered in her fame. The story of her first successes is told in the recent biography of John Blackwood. The secret of her sex was kept from him and from the world for several years, and Dickens was probably the first to guess it. Certain passages in "Scenes From Clerical Life," he declared, could only have been written by a woman.

Among the novels "Middlemarch" stands foremost for literary power, and completeness. As a picture of certain aspects of English life and manners it stands second to the "Newcomes." It is a prose epic and portrays characters that live.

Dorothea, Mr. Casaubon, Mr. Brooke, Lydgate, Caleb Garth, Will Ladislau and Rosamond Vincy are living, moving human beings. It is called a study of provincial life, and no one can read it without being fully acquainted with that life. Around Dorothea and Casaubon we see country society—the gentry, the clergy, the doctors, the bankers, the shopkeepers, the surveyor and farm manager, the horse dealer and all the various persons that go to the making of such a community. And they are drawn with a power and a distinctness almost Shakespearian. The novel is one of the masterpieces of our time.

"Adam Bede," published in 1859, was the most popular novel of the day and perhaps is still the most popular of these novels, though "The Mill on the Floss" almost rivals it. Mrs. Poyser remains unequaled in character drawing.

As a story with a plot "Silas Marner" is the best of all, for it contains the fewest faults and blemishes in construction, while the old weaver of Raveloe remains in the memory forever.

"Daniel Deronda," though containing many striking features, has been placed somewhat below the other novels. It is a religious story without a religion and there are few readers who do not think it disappointing.

GEORGE ELIOT.

George Eliot possessed a lofty character and was actuated by noble purposes. In learning she was one of the most accomplished of women. Her books show how extensive her reading was. She knew and could read and converse in French, German, Italian and Spanish. Greek and Latin she read with ease as well as pleasure, and Hebrew was a favorite study. There was hardly any kind of learning of which she did not possess some knowledge, and what she did not immediately know she knew where to find. She had great capacity for continuous thought and sustained labor. She was not greatly in love with life and was naturally pessimistic. She accepted the philosophy of Comte.

She once wrote: "The highest calling and election is to do without opium and live through all our pain with conscious, clear-eyed endurance. Life, though a good to men on the whole, is a doubtful good to many, and to some not a good at all. To my thought it is a source of constant mental distraction to make the denial of this a part of religion—to go on pretending things are better than they are."

While she lived she did her best to expose and shatter the shams of life. That her works will long remain a power in the world cannot be denied.

CHARLES KINGSLEY,

AUTHOR OF "WESTWARD HO."

(1819–1875.)

"MUSCULAR CHRISTIANITY" is not so common a term in these days as it was two decades ago, nor are the novels of the author of that phrase, perhaps, as much read now as then. "Yeast," "Alton Locke," "Hypatia," "Westward Ho" and "Two Years Ago" have not, of course, gone out of vogue. They belong to literature and will always be more or less read by readers who desire to know that literature, but they were, like so many of Dickens' novels, written for a purpose. Now a novel written for a purpose, or to accomplish some particular reform, when its object is subserved too frequently drops into obscurity, like the other kinds of arguments that have been used to support the cause. The novels of Dickens are something of an exception to this, but it is their immense humanity, their humor and their very considerable literary quality that preserve

them. Kingsley's novels have a much finer literary quality than anything that Dickens ever wrote, but that quality has largely been lost sight of. Not that it is intended here to institute a comparison between Kingsley and Dickens. No novelist of his time, save Thackeray alone, can be compared to the author of "Pickwick," but Kingsley was a more finished writer than he, and is still deserving of remembrance. All he has written will repay the reading.

Charles Kingsley, priest, poet, politician and novelist, was born in 1819—in Queen Victoria's year—as it was that of Ruskin, Lowell, Helps, Whitman and many others whose names have shed luster on the Victorian era. He was educated at private schools, at King's College in London and at Magdalen College, Cambridge. He was ordained a curate in 1842 and shortly after became rector of Eversley, a place in Hampshire, and this was his home for the remainder of his life, though at times broken in upon by Church and other preferments, for he was for nine years professor of modern history at Cambridge University, and he became a canon of Westminster. Apart from his books, his poems and the part he took in the political movements of the times, his life was uneventful. He was

happily married, and had three children. For many years he was one of the most prominent men in England by reason of his vigorous and prolific writings. Born an aristocrat, his sympathies in the political strife of the times were with the poor against the rich, and with the democracy in its just demands for greater recognition, though he maintained that the proper leader in such a movement ought to be a noble or a Churchman. He was a man of ardent piety and of a liberal theology, though he believed that the creed and dogma of the Anglican Church comprised all that was best in Christianity. He was a generous, public-spirited and wholesome man with a substratum of bigotry in his mind. This latter quality once led him to attack John Henry Newman, whereupon that matchless dialectician scored Mr. Kingsley in a way he never forgot.

Kingsley's first published volume was "The Saint's Tragedy," a drama of great power, and showing poetic ability of a high order. Still it is unequal, and is quite unadapted to the stage. But it contains several lyrics and many passages of great beauty. His music, songs and ballads, such as "The Sands of Dee," and "The Three Fishers," are still popular and will be long remembered.

Kingsley's first novel was "Yeast, a Problem," first published serially in *Frazer's Magazine* in 1848. This is a story of English country life, but it dwells on the hardships and oppressions of the peasantry. There is much impressive realism in it. The poor, sodden, hopeless peasantry consoling themselves with strong drink and brutal songs, without ambition and without patriotism, are as strongly drawn as anything in Zola. The story was too true to be received well, but it had effect as an argument. "Alton Locke" next appeared, and this time the scene was laid in London. The hero is a tailor, a poet and a radical, oppressed by poverty and his social surroundings. The most admired character in the book is old Sandy MacKaye, a Scotchman who reads old history, politics and the works of Carlyle; whose talk is crabbed, but his heart is warm, who loves the people with a deep and abiding love, and who rests immovably upon the fact that the only hope for the poor man is the most absolute morality.

When this novel was published it was received with scorn by the higher periodicals, but it made its way among the people, and it was very widely read. Carlyle, who was on terms of intimacy with Kingsley, wrote to him a most characteristic

letter, full of admiration, though justly critical. He says :

I found plenty to like, and be grateful for in the book, abundance, nay exuberance of generous zeal, headlong impetuosity of determination toward the manful side on all manner of questions ; snatches of excellent poetic description, occasional sunbursts of noble insight ; everywhere a certain wild intensity which holds the reader fast as by a spell. . . Saunders MacKaye, my invaluable countryman in this book, is nearly perfect ; indeed I greatly wonder how you did contrive to manage him—his very dialect is as if a native had done it, and the whole existence of the rugged old hero is a wonderfully splendid and coherent piece of Scotch bravura, In both of your women, too, I find some grand poetic features, but neither of them is worked out into the "Daughter of the Sun" she might have been. Indeed nothing is worked out anywhere in comparison with Saunders, and the impression is of a fervid creation still left half chaotic. This is my literary verdict, both the black of it and the white.

Carlyle might have wondered where Kingsley got the old Scotchman, but nobody else now does. He was in fact a reduced and somewhat disguised portrait of Carlyle himself. "Alton Locke" is indeed a fervid story and a powerful piece of writing, and it may still be read with immense pleasure.

"Westward Ho" and "Hypatia" are perhaps the best known and most read of Kingsley's

novels and these have enduring power. "Two Years Ago" is also a vigorous piece of writing, and abounds in muscular Christianity of the right sort. We can recommend these to every lover of a good novel.

CHARLES READE,

HIS NOVELS, HIS PERVERSITY, HIS GENIUS.

(1814–1884.)

It is difficult to account for the neglect into which Reade has fallen since his death in 1884. He seems to have vied with Anthony Trollope in that respect, though his genius was far superior to that of the author of "The Chronicles of Barset."

Reade was contemporary with Bulwer-Lytton, Dickens, and Thackeray, though they had reached the zenith of their fame before he began to write. He was a plant that flowered late and it was not until 1856 that he wrote a novel that attracted wide attention. He was then in his forty-second year and the novel was "It is Never too Late to Mend."

He was born in 1814 and educated at Oxford, where he gained a fellowship in Magdalen College that seems to have made him independent for life. He was called to the bar in 1842, but never

practised his profession, his ambition being to become a playwright. That aspiration never left him. The money he afterward made by his novels he squandered in the production of indifferent plays. Two or three dramas he wrote in collaboration with Tom Taylor and Dion Boucicault had a measure of success, but every play of his own—and he kept writing at them to the end of his life—met with failure.

Never was a more singular infatuation, and he attributed the failure of his pieces to every cause but the true one. It was because of the actors, or the audience, or the east wind, or the scene painters, anything or anybody rather than the play. The inscription on his tomb, prepared by himself, is, "Charles Reade, Dramatist, Novelist, and Journalist."

His want of success in writing for the stage is all the more singular for the reason that his novels contain many thrilling dramatic situations, though perhaps they are not such as can be well represented on the stage.

His first published stories were "Peg Woffington" and "Christie Johnstone," both originally intended for plays. Tom Taylor saw stage possibilities in the story of the immortal Peg and he joined with Reade in dramatizing it under the

name of "Masks and Faces." But "Christie Johnstone" had not plot enough for the drama, though an almost perfect story, and Taylor urged Reade to publish it as a novel. It remains one of Reade's most artistic performances.

Several of the novels were written "with a purpose." "Never Too Late to Mend" is an exposure of the infamous iniquities of the English jails; "Hard Cash" is an attack on private insane asylums, and "Put Yourself in His Place" portrays the tyranny of the trades unions, and there is little question that like some of Dickens' novels they brought about substantial reforms. Aside from "the purpose" which too often interferes with artistic completeness, there are passages in these novels which for intensity, rapidity of movement, and brilliancy have been rarely equaled in fiction. The Australian adventures in "Never Too Late to Mend," the great sea fight with the pirate in "Hard Cash," and the inundation in "Put Yourself in His Place" are triumphs of powerful and masterly description only to be found in the greatest of romances. They may be read and reread with constant delight. Christie's rescue of the young artist carried out by the tide is another that may be mentioned.

"The Cloister and the Hearth" is Reade's masterpiece, and it is undoubtedly a very great story. Splendid in invention, accurate in its historic setting, replete with learning, incomparable in its simplicity, tenderness, and pathos, and full of stirring scenes and adventures, it is a noble and beautiful romance.

It is founded on the rather mythical story of Gerard, or Gerhard, the father of Erasmus, betrothed to Margaret Brandt, who becomes a mother when Gerard is absent at Rome on a special mission. The period of the tale is the fifteenth century.

"Griffith Gaunt, or Jealousy" is a story of great power, turning as it does on the most tremendous passion in human nature. The three chief characters, Griffith, the madly jealous, capricious, and passionate man; Catharine, his wife, the proud, hasty, but devotedly religious woman, and Mercy Vint, the lovely and self-sacrificing victim, are vividly drawn.

Nothing better illustrates the change in our way of looking at novels in the last forty years than this work. When it appeared it was savagely assailed by the critics, just as "Jane Eyre" had been a few years earlier, because of its immorality. It is not an immoral book at all. It cannot com-

pare in its portrayal of illicit love with the novels of Sarah Grand, Thomas Hardy, George Moore, and a dozen others of our modern novelists who deal in nastiness and filth, but in Reade's day those subjects were tabooed or only remotely hinted at, and hence the outcry.

Reade, as was his invariable custom, assailed his critics in his turn, calling them "prurient prudes." He brought an action for libel against one of his American critics, gaining a nominal verdict.

Even in the briefest notice of Charles Reade his methods and habits as a writer must be described. He was as unblushing and bold a plagiarist as ever lived. In the preface to "A Simpleton" he undertakes to explain and justify his system by the example of Shakespeare, Molière, Scott and some others known to fame. But his defense is weak. They "lifted" and transformed. They found dead bodies and made them living souls. Reade's stealing was grand larceny only. In "Griffith Gaunt" the trial scene is taken bodily, with but the change of name here, and there, from one of the old English state trials. In "The Cloister and the Hearth" whole passages are transferred from the "Colloquies" of Erasmus, while some of the insane asylum scenes in

" Hard Cash " are taken from " Valentine Vox," an earlier novel, dealing with the same subject, or from newspaper reports.

The last story he ever wrote is entitled " The Picture," which was first published in *Harper's Magazine* for 1884. It is almost a literal translation of a French story that appeared in 1855, entitled " Mademoiselle Malapeire," by Mme. Reybaud.

There was just enough change in the names and few minor details to show Reade's consciousness that he was dealing in stolen goods. The theft was discovered at once, but just after the story appeared Reade died and the incident was closed.

These things, entirely unnecessary to him, for he was a man of the most undoubted genius and original power, were due to his perversity, and to the same half-insane notion that made him believe that he was a playwright, " Shakespeare stole, Molière took his own wherever he found it, Sterne appropriated the learning of others, therefore I can do the same." That was his logic. He was a great writer and novelist, and to such a one much can be forgiven.

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY,

A LONG FORGOTTEN POET.

Do many people remember Philip James Bailey?

There must be a good many readers that have some acquaintance with the once famous poem entitled "Festus," that two generations ago delighted and thrilled countless readers of the English-speaking world.

It was in 1839 that Philip James Bailey published "Festus." He had been educated at Glasgow university, and was studying law. He was afterward called to the bar as a member of Lincoln's Inn, but he never practised.

When his poem appeared it was a time of dearth in English poesy. Wordsworth and Southey had ceased writing, Browning had written only "Pauline," "Paracelsus" and "Stratford," and had no readers. Tennyson was still obscure, his volume of 1833 being all that he had published, and this mercilessly scored by the critics, while Richard Hengist Horne had not yet written

"Orion." It is small wonder, therefore, that "Festus" was received with acclaim, and the youthful poet hailed as the rising star.

It contained many fine passages that struck the popular fancy, the following being one of the most quoted and best known:

> We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;
> In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
> We should count time by heart throbs. He most lives
> Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.

Since its first publication the poem has passed through eleven editions in England and over thirty in this country.

"Festus," which is one form of the name of Faust, is a poetical drama. It has the same underlying idea as the "Faustus" of Marlowe, the "Faust" of Goethe, and the book Job—a human being tempted by the power of evil. As in Job, Lucifer appears before the throne of heaven and asks permission to tempt Festus, which is granted. One line in this permission greatly pleased the Universalists at the time, as indeed does the whole tenor of the poem. God says, "He is thine to tempt," but immediately adds the restriction, "Upon his soul thou hast no power. All souls are mine for aye."

But the opening is weak and not at all com-

parable to Faust, for where can be the loss to the human being if Lucifer cannot win his soul? Nor is Lucifer in any way such a master spirit as Mephistopheles. He is, in fact, rather an amiable devil, and instead of tempting Festus occupies himself in teaching a system of divinity. He reveals to him all manner of profound knowledge; carries him up into heaven, where he learns that his name is written in the book of life; conveys him through space, and invests him with the power of ubiquity; enlarges the bounds of his knowledge, talks wildly of conflagrations and the burning of worlds, but as a general thing is rather a pleasant and edifying companion and an exceedingly serviceable guide. He conducts him through hades and hell also, where there is a long passage between Festus and Elissa that greatly excites Lucifer's jealousy and leads to about the only tragedy in the volume.

At length, having explored the whole universe, Festus is elevated to the throne of all the earth and is monarch for a single day, but he does nothing and it results in nothing. Then follows a millennium, and after that a judgment day. All mankind are saved and Lucifer and his hosts are readmitted into heaven. The drama ends in universal felicity.

Festus is fickle, and infirm of purpose, while, Lucifer, a very gentleman-like devil, hasn't the verve or swing of Goethe's Mephistopheles or Milton's Satan. Milton's hero, particularly, usually awakens our sympathies, and we are apt to think, as Lord Thurlow did, that he is "a fine fellow, and ought to win." But Lucifer doesn't stir us. At one time he seems like the personification of evil; at another the slave of his own passions. When he first appears before the throne of heaven it is not like the grand accusing angel in Job, but like a mere suppliant, begging that he may have Festus to try his powers upon. Finally, after a series of travels through the universe with Festus, the latter seems to turn out to be the stronger character, and in the end Lucifer and his hosts are reformed and regenerated and take their places once more among the heavenly hosts.

These are the weak points in the construction of this highly poetical drama. The theology and philosophy are also somewhat threadbare and shopworn for these days, as the theology and philosophy of a youth of twenty-three more than half a century ago would be likely to be, and this further tends to this underestimation of the poem. But when this is said there is still much left to be said in praise of it, of its beautiful imagery and

noble aspirations. There are shining gems scattered throughout its pages that kindle and thrill us. He describes a poet :

> He wrote amid the ruins of his heart,
> They were his throne and theme ; like some lone king
> Who tells the story of the land he lost
> And how he lost it. . . .
> . . . It is no task for suns
> To shine. He knew himself a bard ordained.

Here is a fine simile :

> Yet truth and falsehood meet in seeming like
> The falling leaf and shadow on the pool's face.

And this :

> Trifles like these make up the present time ;
> The Iliad and the Pyramids the past.

Festus has many love affairs, is fickle, and passes from one to another as a bee passes from flower to flower. Angela, Clara, Helen, Elissa, by turns, attract him, and by turns are abandoned but these adventures, if such they may be called, give occasion for some of the finest passages in the poem.

In the description of nature, of night, the stars, the moon, the heavens, there are some truly noble and poetic lines :

How strangely fair
Yond round still star, which looks half-suffering from,
And half-rejoicing in its own strong fire ;
Making itself a lonelihood of light.

Here is a picture of rare beauty :

Before us shone the sun,
The angel waved her hand ere she began,
As bidding earth be still. The birds ceased singing,
And the trees breathing, and the lake smoothed down
Each shining wrinklet, and the wind drew off.
Time leant him o'er his scythe, and, listening, wept.

And again :

We never see the stars
Till we can see naught but them. So with truth.

Mr. Bailey wrote two other long poems, "The Angel World" and "The Mystic," which never met with much favor. In 1889 on the fiftieth anniversary of the first publication of "Festus," he published a semi-centennial edition of the poem in which he incorporated parts of his other poems, not greatly to the advantage of any of them.

AUSTIN DOBSON'S CAREER.

THERE are few literary careers more enviable than that of Austin Dobson.

He is an example of what England does for her literary men of genius—or, at least, of sane genius.

Mr. Dobson is a poet and essayist and has written delightful verse and charming essays. He seems to have justly estimated his own powers, and has never attempted Homeric flights with the wings of Theocritus. He has kept himself strictly within a particular corner of English literature and has been content to master that, leaving the larger fields of study and inquiry to other adventurers. The result is that he is one of the most popular, most entertaining, and most accurate writers in his domain that we have ever had.

Mr. Dobson was born at Plymouth, England, in January, 1840, and after an education at private schools he became a clerk in the government

board of trade in 1856, where, by gradual steps, he rose to be the chief. After forty-five years of service he now retires on a pension, while he also receives a pension from the literary fund.

It was in 1873 that he first attracted public attention in a volume of verses entitled "Vignettes in Rhyme." They were so pleasing, so fresh, so novel in style to English readers that they attracted immediate attention and for a time seemed to set a fashion in verse. He was one of the first, if not the very first, of the younger school of English poets to make the old French style of poetry—the triolet, the rondel, the villanelle, and the ballade—familiar and delightful to English ears, while his *vers de société* challenged, in lightness of touch, even Mr. Locker-Lampson. Verses have rarely tripped to a daintier measure than those of Mr. Dobson.

His pictures are genre, his themes are common and of everyday life, but he clothes them with an auroral charm that makes them seem evanescent and elusive. His verses are so light and evasive that they can be subjected to no analysis. You cannot say the beauty is here, for when you point the finger at the spot, lo ! it seems somewhere else. The lines appeal to feeling only. His point of view is never that of the clubman, but always

that of the poet, although he writes on subjects that are topics of the clubs.

What an exquisite charm there is in the ballade, "On a Fan that belonged to the Marquise De Pompadour."

Chicken skin, delicate, white,
Painted by Carlo Vanloo.
Loves in a riot of light,
Roses and vaporous blue;
Hark to the dainty frou-frou!
Picture above if you can,
Eyes that could meet as the dew—
This was the Pompadour's fan!

The mere thought brings up the images of the courtiers, the beauties, and all the gossip and intrigue of Louis XVth's court, and then:

Where are the secrets it knew?
Weavings of plot and of plan?
But where is the Pompadour, too?
This was the Pompadour's fan.

So, too, his poem on the picture of the "Marquise" appeals to one for what the poet does not say as well for what it does.

The poems are not great. They come into no rivalry with Shelley or Keats or Tennyson, and yet they are in their kind almost perfect. They are like a finely painted miniature, or a perfectly finished cameo.

Mr. Dobson's prose is as finished as his poetry. He has absorbed eighteenth century literature until it has become to him more familiar than the literature of his own time. He was first led into this domain by Thackeray and he has never left it. He could have had no better master, and have found no more delightful ground. Its highways and byways he has traveled in every direction, and he has made many pleasant revelations to the world concerning it. Hogarth is one of his passions, while Goldsmith is his hobby. He has written on Steele, Gay, Fielding, Walpole, Goldsmith, Boswell, Johnson, Reynolds, Prior, Spence, Pope, Jonas Hanway, Gray, Chesterfield, Swift, Richardson, Lady Mary Coke, Lady Mary Montague, Mary Lepel, Cowper, Garrick, and almost every one else of the time about whom there could be any human curiosity, and in addition to these on the fashions, amusements, manners, and places of entertainment of the Englishmen of the Georgian era.

These books and essays are written in pure and limpid English and belong to the books in Bacon's category that "serve for delight." No one can read them without lasting enjoyment.

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH.

(1819–1861.)

Among the men of the Victorian era who gave promise in youth of great eminence in life Arthur Hugh Clough stands among the foremost. His name is now the shadow of a shade, and his works are but little known, but fifty years ago there were few Englishmen who seemed more sure of a permanent place in our literature. Short and broken as his career was, and little as his actual performance proved to be, it is still worthy of remembrance, as well for what it was as for what it might have been.

Arthur Clough was one of the true Victorians, having been born in the Queen's year, 1819. His father was a Liverpool cotton merchant, and the child passed his earliest years in Charleston, S. C. At the age of ten he was sent to Rugby School, and belonged to the famous boy set described in the story of "Tom Brown." He was not the Arthur of the novel, that portraiture being now

associated with Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, the celebrated Dean of Westminster, but some of the characteristics of Arthur Clough went to the making up of the portrait.

Of all these brilliant boys, young Clough was acknowledged to possess the keenest mind, and won his way to Oxford the most easily. At the university he gained many of the great prizes and was distinguished among a thousand students for his scholarship. Leaving Oxford he spent some time as an instructor in the University of London. There he met Walter Bagehot, and the two young men became warm and sympathetic friends, Clough, who was the senior by seven years, exercising no little influence on Bagehot's subsequent career.

In 1852 Clough accepted a position at Harvard as lecturer and instructor in English literature, but he only remained about a year, returning to London to accept an educational position under the government. He wrote much, worked hard, married, and then his health, never robust, began to fail. He went to Italy, but to no purpose. In November, 1861, he died in Florence, and is buried there in the Protestant cemetery.

Clough wrote several long poems and many

short ones, which have been collected and published. His principal poem has the somewhat forbidding title of "The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich," which means "The Hut of the Bearded Well," and is written in hexameter verse, a meter, the author says, adopted after reading Longfellow's "Evangeline."

It is replete with wit and mirth, interspersed with deep and serious thought concerning the problems of life and being. It in outline describes the adventures of an Oxford vacation party, one of the members of which is the hero, and there are several love episodes. It is not diffcult to get interested in it, and it is well worth reading. Quotation can hardly do iustice to it:

I am sorry to say your Providence puzzles me sadly ;
Children of circumstance are we to be ? You answer, On no wise !
Where does circumstance end, and where Providence ? Where begins it ?
What are we to resist, and what are we to be friends with ?
If there is battle 'tis battle by night. I stand in the darkness,
Here in the mêlée of men, Ionian and Dorian on both sides
Signal and password known ; which is friend and which is foeman ?
Yet is my feeling rather to ask, where is the battle ?
O that the armies indeed were arrayed ! O joy of the onset !

Sound, thou trumpet of God ; come forth, great cause, to
array us.
King and leader appear ; thy soldiers sorrowing seek thee.
Would that the armies indeed were arrayed ! O where is
the battle !

Clough, strongly pessimistic, did not attempt to solve these problems, but stated and accepted them as if they were inevitable and insoluble. It was he that Emerson had in mind—though they were the best of friends, but far asunder in their habits of thought—when he said : "'Ah!' says my languid Oxford gentleman, 'nothing new or true—and no matter.'" The following stanza expresses this feeling :

Like a good subject and wise man,
Believe whatever things you can,
Take your religion as 'twas found you,
And say no more of it, confound you.

And yet it is hardly just to call Clough's poetry cynical. It is realistic and virile and describes much in our thoughts and feelings and speculations that leads to cynical conclusions. Much that is pretentious and more that is absurd in creed and thought dissolve under the keen light he throws upon it.

How keen are the following verses :

Some future day, when what is now is not,
When all old faults and follies are forgot,
And thoughts of difference passed like dreams away—
We'll meet again upon some future day.

When all that hindered, all that vexed our love,
The tall, rank weeds that climb the blade above,
And all but it has yielded to decay—
We'll meet again upon some future day.

When we have proved, each on his course alone,
The wider world, and learnt what's now unknown,
Have made life clear and worked out each a way—
We'll meet again ; we shall have much to say.

With happier mood, and feelings born anew,
Our boyhood's bygone fancies we'll review,
Talk o'er old talks, play as we used to play,
And meet again on many a future day.

Some day, which oft our hearts shall yearn to see
In some far year, though distant yet to be,
Shall we indeed—ye winds and waters say !—
Meet yet again upon some future day ?

Many other of his poems we would delight to quote, such as "Green Fields of England," or "Where lies the land to which the ship would go?" but we can only refer readers to the printed volume. There they will find much that will be a revelation and a delight.

WALTER BAGEHOT,

BUSINESS MAN IN LITERATURE.

(1826–1877.)

We frequently hear of the "business man in politics," though perhaps not so often as we should, but we do not hear, save at great intervals, of the business man in letters. That is, of the man who, highly educated or with strong literary tendencies, after devoting most of his time to the acquisition of fortune in the ordinary channels of business, giving some part of his remaining hours to the literary calling. There must be large numbers of men in the United States who are university bred, not in professional life but engaged in other callings, who could, if they would, do great things in literature and art and thus promote the general culture of the public.

Doubtless there are some who are thus engaged, as our art institutes and libraries testify, but their number is by no means as great as it might be.

Of men of this character Walter Bagehot is the best type we have, though his fame to-day, more than twenty years after his death, is by no means as great as it should be.

Those who know Bagehot's works know their inexpressible charm and value—their charm as literary productions, their value as increasing the world's treasures of thought.

It was said by one of his countrymen that when Bagehot died he "carried away into the next world more originality of thought than is now to be found in the three estates of the realm."

He wrote on what Carlyle has called "the dismal science"—political economy—and made it as interesting as a novel; his work on banking, entitled "Lombard Street," valuable as it is to all thinkers on finance, is fascinating through its mere literary expression; he wrote "The English Constitution," and statesmen make it their handbook, while his writings on history and on a hundred topics, critical and literary, belong to literature, and may be read with infinite pleasure by all sorts and conditions of readers. And yet he was a business man, pursuing a business calling.

His life was neither eventful nor adventurous, though he was born in Somersetshire, England, the country of the Doones, made famous to us in

fiction by the adventures of John Ridd and Lorna Doone. He was educated at London University, where he came to some extent under the influence of Arthur Hugh Clough, who was one of the instructors there and was a few years the elder. There were points of likeness between them that attracted each to the other. They both had high boyish spirits and a good deal of vigor, but also great natural reserve and intense dislike for everything approaching sentimentality. Both were passionate admirers of Wordsworth's poetry, and both loved the truth and sought it eagerly. There was a tendency to cynicism in both of them, arising out of the feeling that men were in such a hurry to solve the puzzles of life and nature that they were constantly grabbing at half-truths and consequently meeting always with discomfiture.

Bagehot at first was intended for the bar, but gave that up to join his father in the management of a bank in Somerset, which had been in the family for several generations, and also to take part in the business of merchant and ship-owner. This required frequent visits to London and Liverpool, and Bagehot soon developed a genuine liking for the larger operations of commerce, and found business much more amusing than pleasure. He

exhibited a large capacity for finance and commerce, but he never gave up his fondness for literature and was an industrious contributor to the reviews. His articles cover such topics as Hartley Coleridge, Shelley, Beranger, Clough's poems, Wordsworth, Tennyson and Browning, Shakespeare, Milton, Cowper, Gibbon, Macaulay, Sterne and Thackeray, Dickens, the Waverley novels and many others. These were in a measure his recreations, and they form a series of essays charming in style and full of vigorous thought and acute criticism. Meantime he married and became the editor of the great financial paper of London, the *Economist*, the opinions of which carried weight not only in the financial world but in parliament. On several occasions Mr. Bagehot was summoned before parliamentary commissions to give his opinion on financial measures pending before parliament. He has been called "a sort of supplementary chancellor of the exchequer," both parties resorting to him with equal confidence.

He was, in fact, a statesman without office, a politician without a party, a legislator out of parliament. He tried for parliament once or twice, but failed of election because he was too honest to resort to the arts of the politician. He did

not practise the Italian proverb, "If you would be successful you must not be too good." So he remained out of parliament, but stayed in the business world and the literary world and made a high mark in both. His works on "The English Constitution," on "Lombard Street," on "Politics and Physics," on "Economist Studies" are now almost classics, and some of them are text-books in English and American universities. In addition to the essays already mentioned he wrote on Bolingbroke, Pitt, Peel, Gladstone, Disraeli, Cornewall Lewis and other great English statesmen in a style and with a grasp of the subject that rival Macaulay.

Some of his sentences are epigrammatic in their form and weighted with thought.

You may talk of the tyranny of Nero and Tiberius, but the real tyranny is the tyranny of your next-door neighbor. What law is so cruel as the law of doing what he does? What yoke so galling as the necessity of being like him? What espionage of despotism comes to your door so effectually as the eye of the man who lives at your door?

I can make allowance for the poor voter; he is most likely ill educated, certainly ill off, and a little money is a nice treat to him. What he does is wrong, but it is intelligible. What I do not understand is the position of the rich, respectable, virtuous members of a party which countenances these things. They are like the man who stole stinking fish; they commit a crime and they get no benefit.

He was often sententious and witty in his replies to questions. If asked what he thought on some subject not familiar to him he would say: "My mind is to let on that subject—pray tell me what to think."

Before his marriage, which was a very happy one, his mother used to urge him to marry, to which he would banteringly say: "A man's mother is his misfortune, but his wife is his fault."

Asked if he had enjoyed a particular dinner, he answered: "No, the sherry was bad; it tasted as if L—— had dropped his h's into it."

He was a great writer and a profound thinker, the ideal business man in literature.

HENRY CRABB ROBINSON.

(1775–1867.)

If length of days, freedom from pecuniary care, the companionship and friendship of the most noted men and women of his time and the general respect of society constitute earthly happiness and success, Henry Crabb Robinson ought to have been, and, so far as we can discern from his diary and letters, actually was, one of the happiest and most successful of men. He was born in 1775 and died in 1867 in his ninety-second year, a period of life exceeding by a dozen years the longest accorded by the Psalmist to humanity, nor can it be said that at any time was "their strength labor and sorrow." His enjoyment of life seemed to continue up to the very end. The last entry in his diary was made only five days before his death. When he was several years past eighty he made this entry in a friend's album:

Were this my last hour (and that of an octogenarian cannot be far off) I would thank God for permitting me to behold so much of the excellence conferred on individuals, Of woman I saw the type of her heroic greatness in the person of Mrs. Siddons; of her fascinations in Mrs. Jordan and Mlle. Mars; I listened with rapture to the dreamy monologues of Coleridge—that "old man eloquent;" I traveled with Wordsworth, the greatest of our lyric-philosophical poets; I relished the wit and pathos of Charles Lamb; I conversed freely with Goethe at his own table, beyond all competition the supreme genius of his age and country. He acknowledged his obligations only to Shakespeare, Spinoza and Linnaeus, as Wordsworth feared competition only with Chaucer, Spencer, Shakespeare and Milton. Compared with Goethe, the memory of Schiller, Wieland, Herder, Tieck, the Schlegels and Schelling has become faint.

He might have gone on and enumerated a hundred others of eminence, the most brilliant persons known to the nineteenth century, whose names gleam in the pages of his diaries and reminiscences.

Diaries, such as Pepys', Evelyn's, Greville's, Moore's, and Crabb Robinson's are not literature, but there is no question as to their human interest and as to their abiding value as records of the period they cover and of the men and women they describe. This is particularly true of Crabb Robinson's diaries, for he was a cool and unimpassioned observer, fond of society, excellent in conversation and proud of being the companion

and friend of distinguished people. He was not vain or sycophantish like Boswell, a Paul Pry, or a bore, but had real and substantial merits of his own. He was an omnivorous reader, and although he had not passed through the great English universities, he had studied at Jena in that great epoch when Goethe and Schiller and Wieland were at the height of their fame. He was a student of speculative philosophy and understood Kant. He had known Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey almost from the moment they first appeared as authors until they died. He was intimate with Charles and Mary Lamb and with their friends. He associated with Rogers and his set. He met Mme. De Staël when she was an exile in Germany, and taught her German philosophy, and he later met her in England and assisted her in some business matters. In the early years of the century he went to Germany, Sweden, Denmark and Spain as a correspondent of the London *Times*, and he just missed seeing the battle of Corunna.

He was an English barrister and was called to the bar when he was nearly forty. After fifteen years of moderately successful practice he retired, having secured an income of five hundred pounds a year, which was all sufficient for his moderate

bachelor wants. He was one of the original members of the Athenæum Club and a founder of the University College of London and for many years a member of its senate and council.

Such a varied life is the lot of few mortals, and its record, therefore, possesses the keenest interest.

One cannot turn these pages at random without falling upon some quotable saying or interesting statement. Here is one under date of November 29, 1826. It is an account of a dinner party at the house of James Stephen:

> I had a most interesting companion in young Macaulay, one of the most promising of the rising generation I have seen for a long time. He is the author of several much-admired articles in the *Edinburgh Review*. . . . He has a good face—not the delicate features of a man of genius and sensibility, but the strong lines and well-knit limbs of a man sturdy in body and mind. Very eloquent and cheerful, Overflowing with words and not poor in thought. Liberal in opinion, but no radical. He seems a correct as well as a full man. He showed a minute knowledge of subjects not introduced by himself.

This last sentence marks the experienced diner out ever on the alert for those brilliant talkers who get up subjects expressly for the occasion. Macaulay was never a talker of that kind.

Turn to another page and we find this:

Dined at the hall. After nine I called on Charles Lamb. He was much better in health and spirits than when I saw him last. Though tête-à-tête he was able to pun. I was speaking of my first brief when he asked. "Did you not exclaim: 'Thou great first cause, least understood'"?

He has, in fact, preserved a great many of Lamb's puns and witticisms, as well as other characteristics that make the gentle Elia forever dear to us.

He was a constant patron of the theater and has many anecdotes of Kemble and Siddons, of Leston and Mrs. Jordan, of Edmund Kean and Helen Faucit, of Macready, Miss O'Neil, Ellen Tree and the long list of great actors and actresses that graced the English stage for three-quarters of a century. He knew Mrs. Barbauld, Mrs. Opie, Joanna Baillie and Lady Byron, and frequently visited them, finding in their conversation much enjoyment. He repeated to Wordsworth for the first time Mrs. Barbauld's famous sonnet on "Life," one of the most exquisite of English minor poems. He attended Coleridge's lectures, corresponded with Southey, made several tours with Wordsworth and visited him annually at Rydal Mount.

At his breakfasts and dinners he drew around him men of wit and cultivation and of almost

every variety of opinion, and it was not uncommon for Tories and Liberals, High Churchmen and Dissenters, to find themselves side by side at his hospitable board, each enjoying the kindly flow of disinterested conversation. He himself was a Liberal in politics and a Unitarian in religion, but this did not prevent him from being the most devoted and admiring friend of the High Church and Tory Wordsworth.

In his early life he knew Byron, Shelley, Keats and Tom Moore, and in his later years Tennyson, the Brownings, Thackeray, Dickens, Bulwer and Disraeli, and his diary abounds with anecdotes or stories about them. Like Dr. Johnson, he believed in keeping his friendships in repair, and as his early friends passed away he made new friends and new associations. He preserved his youthful spirits almost to the last, and this, combined with a certain oddity of manner, sometimes terrified the rather sedate and solemn young men who were invited to his breakfasts for the first time. His familiars called him "Old Crabb," and his penchant for conversation is illustrated by the story of how Rogers used to say to his guests when he saw Mr. Robinson coming: "Here comes Old Crabb; if any one has a good thing to say, he had better say it at once."

But from all we can learn "Old Crabb" did not always nor often monopolize the conversation. He frequently told the story of once having asked Mme. de Stael her opinion of Coleridge. Her reply was: "He is very great in monologue, but he has no idea of dialogue."

In his conversation Mr. Robinson generally conceded there was such a thing as dialogue.

It is years since these volumes were first published. They are still worth reading by those who would know something of the byways of our literary history.

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